

THE IOWA IDEA:  
ITS ORIGINS AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

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by  
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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION

Iowa, in the early years of the Twentieth Century, was the scene of bitter factionalism within the ranks of the Republican party. This was "a turbulent period in Iowa political history, when change was being made from an older order to a newer one in the Republican party."<sup>1</sup> Two groups emerged as proponents of the divergent views. One was called the "Standpatters." The name defined their attitude toward any major changes in what they regarded as orthodox Republicanism. The other group was known as the "Progressive" branch of the party, and similarly, this designation gave some evidence of their receptivity toward change and new ideas in Republican policies. However, these names provided only convenient labels, as many shades of political coloring existed between them, and probably only a few adherents within each group represented the extreme of either position.

One important factor contributing to the division of Iowa Republicans was the development of a concept called the "Iowa Idea." This term was used following the writing of the state Republican platform in 1901. One clause in that platform had demanded modifi-

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<sup>1</sup>Emory English to Elbert W. Harrington, April 10, 1937, Emerson Hough Papers, Vol. 130.

cation of tariff schedules to prevent the sheltering of monopoly. This statement was to be the cause of much difficulty for the Republicans of Iowa. The "Iowa Idea" was adopted by Albert Baird Cummins, who was Governor of Iowa from 1902 to 1908. His name became widely associated with the "Iowa Idea" and he was often considered to be the author of the statement. This "idea" caused bitter controversy among Iowa Republicans; acquired different meanings according to the politics of the interpreter; and contributed eventually to the national split of the Republican party.

In the decade 1900 to 1910, Iowa enjoyed considerable influence in national affairs. This was one reason why the upheaval in Iowa had national implications. Two Iowans, Leslie M. Shaw and James Wilson were members of Roosevelt's cabinet; the first serving as Secretary of the Treasury, and the latter as Secretary of Agriculture. Senators William Boyd Allison and Jonathan P. Dolliver were Iowa Senators with more than statewide influence. Senator Allison, in conjunction with Senators Spooner of Wisconsin, Aldrich of Rhode Island and Platt of Connecticut, was part of a quartet in the Senate referred to as the "Big Four." Senator Dolliver played a leading part in the movements for railroad regulation and tariff reform. George E. Roberts, publisher of the Fort Dodge Messenger, was the Director of the United States Mint. Iowans also occupied key positions in the House of Representatives. Congressman Henderson had succeeded Reed as Speaker of the House and Congress-

man Hepburn was chairman of the House Committees on Foreign Relations and Interstate Commerce.

With so many of Iowa's citizens serving in positions of importance in the national government, political turmoil in the state necessarily produced repercussions in Washington. Opinions and pronouncements by Iowans, especially the "Progressive" Governor Cummins and his friends, were often heard in the nation's capital and aroused heated reaction from some members of the influential Iowa group. This reaction was particularly vehement whenever opinions publicized by the "Progressive" element in Iowa seemed to be heretical statements for those who professed adherence to Republican dogma.

The year 1904 was a presidential election year, and most "Standpatters" were anxious to avoid serious intra-party strife so as not to jeopardize Republican Congressional and White House aspirations. The views of Cummins and the publicity attendant to the "Iowa Idea" were considered as dangers to Republican election chances and assaults against orthodox Republican doctrine.

The party strife in Iowa was a forecast of events that were to take place in other Republican states as "Progressivism" became a national movement. The emergence of the "Iowa Idea" as a motive for this schism, and the midwestern and national ramifications of this internecine conflict are the principal objectives of this study.

## CHAPTER II

### THE 1901 AND 1902 PLATFORMS

#### I. CUMMINS' BACKGROUND

To properly assess the "Iowa Idea," the views of its chief exponent require examination. Why did A. B. Cummins espouse the cause of tariff reform and reciprocity? He had been a successful corporate lawyer in partnership with Carroll Wright of Des Moines. The firm had served as legal representative of railroads; "gas and water companies in Des Moines; and a number of central Iowa industries."<sup>1</sup> Cummins was supported in political life by bankers, insurance and railroad executives, manufacturers, and large landowners.<sup>2</sup> For a person with such professional and political affiliations to espouse tariff reform appeared paradoxical, yet Cummins was not a lackey of these vested interests but retained his independence.

An investigation of the letters and speeches of Cummins sheds some light on the sources of his opinions. In September, 1901, speaking in Centerville, Iowa, Mr. Cummins declared:

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth C. Acrea, "Iowa Gubernatorial Campaign of 1906: The Conservative Attack on Cummins," (unpublished Master's thesis, Drake University, Des Moines, 1964), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 28.



That commanding intellect which dominated the affairs of his time, the apostle of protection, that supreme American, that leader of the people and idol of his party, James G. Blaine, years ago pointed out that there were instances in which, for the benefit of our own manufacturers, workingmen, farmers, producers and consumers, we could well afford to reduce or abolish, as to a particular nation, our tariff upon certain imports, provided that such nation would likewise reduce or abolish its tariff upon our exports to its consumers. It was not inconsistent with the idea of protection. On the contrary, tariff duties were necessary in order to furnish a basis for the reciprocity that Blaine proposed . . . .<sup>1</sup>

Speaking in Pittsburgh, Cummins declared that Blaine was:

. . . the most persuasive advocate that protection ever had, and was the first man who planted in the American mind a living conception of the function of reciprocity. Moreover, he was, with respect to these subjects, the most accomplished statesman of the Republic.<sup>2</sup>

Another prominent Republican influence upon Cummins was William McKinley and the ideas he expressed in his last speech in Buffalo, September 5, 1901. In a talk delivered December 12, 1903, to the Merchants Association of Boston, the Iowa Governor declared:

The reciprocity which I have outlined is the reciprocity for which I believe Blaine expended his maturest wisdom and which he illuminated with the best thoughts of his ripest years. It is the reciprocity which McKinley saw as he uttered his last word to the American people.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Manuscript copy of speech, Cummins Papers, Telegrams and Speeches, Box 29, File 114.

<sup>2</sup>Manuscript copy of speech, Cummins Papers, Speeches, Box 30, File 119.

<sup>3</sup>Manuscript copy of speech, Cummins Papers, Speeches, Box 30, File 119.

McKinley had declared in his speech in Buffalo:

A system which provides a mutual exchange of commodities is manifestly essential to the continued healthful growth of our export trade. We must not repose in the fancied security that we can forever sell everything and buy little or nothing. If such a thing were possible it would not be best for us or for those with whom we deal. We should take from our customers such of their products as we can use without harm to our industries and labor.

Reciprocity is the natural outgrowth of our wonderful industrial development under the domestic policy now firmly established. What we produce beyond our domestic consumption must have a vent abroad. The excess must be relieved through a foreign outlet, and we should sell everywhere we can, and buy wherever the buying will enlarge our sales and productions, and thereby make a greater demand for home labor.<sup>1</sup>

The portion of the speech which might have appealed especially to Governor Cummins asserted:

The period of exclusiveness is past. The expansion of our trade and commerce is the pressing problem. Commercial wars are unprofitable. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the time; measures of retaliation are not.

If, perchance, some of our tariffs are no longer needed for revenue or to encourage and protect our industries at home, why should they not be employed to extend and promote our markets abroad?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Francis Curtis, The Republican Party (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), pp. 524-530.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

During the administration of President McKinley, the Dingley Tariff had been passed "which gave the President a green light to proceed with reciprocity negotiations."<sup>1</sup> The American diplomat who negotiated these agreements was an Iowan, John A. Kasson, who accepted McKinley's offer of Minister Plenipotentiary to negotiate reciprocity treaties as head of a reciprocity commission with offices in the State Department.<sup>2</sup> Cummins referred to these Kasson treaties in one of his speeches:

President McKinley, proceeding upon the hypothesis that the Dingley Act meant what it said, immediately appointed John A. Kasson, a distinguished statesman and diplomat, to conduct negotiations for the state department, looking to reciprocal treaties . . . , and in the years 1899 and 1900 he, on behalf of the United States, signed treaties with France, with Great Britain . . . with Denmark, . . . with Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Argentina. These treaties were all transmitted to the senate by President McKinley, with his recommendation for their ratification, and they have ever since remained without action, either favorable or unfavorable.<sup>3</sup>

Two of Cummins' supporters wrote to him in 1902 and praised his work. The writers stated that they hoped the work that Cummins was doing would "bear abundant fruit toward convincing the Repub-

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<sup>1</sup>Edward Younger, John A. Kasson (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1955), p. 364.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Manuscript copy of speech, n.d., Cummins Papers, Speeches, Box 30, File 119.

licans of this Nation as to the desirability of perpetuating the masterly policy of Blaine, Kasson, and McKinley."<sup>1</sup>

That Blaine, McKinley and Kasson did influence the thinking of Governor Cummins cannot be denied, but the extent of this influence is open to question. To assert that these were the only influences in the molding of Cummins' tariff and reciprocity ideas is an over-simplification. He was also undoubtedly influenced by the "awakening sentiment that gripped the whole country after 1901," when "the whole country arose in revolt against the rule of the conservatives . . . ." <sup>2</sup> Cummins was concerned about business becoming so powerful that it could "corrupt governmental processes" and he was fearful of monopoly threatening the interests of investors and consumers. <sup>3</sup> "The principle that the government of the United States and the government of the state shall be conducted by its men, and not by its corporations, is nearer to the hearts of the people than any article of partisan faith," the Governor declared. <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Oce B. Jackman and H. L. Carroll to Cummins, December 11, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 27.

<sup>2</sup>Elbert W. Harrington, "A Survey of the Political Ideas of Albert B. Cummins," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, XXXIX (October, 1941), p. 364.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Pamphlet, The Workingman and His True Friends, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. II.

Cummins' name became associated, in the minds of Iowa farmers, with the virtues of honesty, integrity and capability when he was chosen as an attorney representing the Farmers' Protective Association against the barbed wire trust earlier in his career. "B. F. Gue said of him, 'He was matched against the ablest patent lawyers in the country, and in every conflict proved equal to the occasion, winning a national reputation.'"<sup>1</sup> Albert Cummins believed that government ought to be a social agency, declaring, "Governments are created first, to provide for the public welfare; second to prescribe and enforce private rights."<sup>2</sup> The Constitution was a "command to look after the welfare of the people, rather than a mere injunction against invading rights of the states."<sup>3</sup>

The Iowa Governor was not opposed to corporations as such. He once said that he did not view the association of men in corporations with alarm and that much of the material development of this nation was due to corporations.<sup>4</sup> However, he continued by saying that the laws for correcting the evils of the trusts should not be

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<sup>1</sup>Harrington, op. cit., p. 341.

<sup>2</sup>Carroll P. Hurd, "Iowa's Place in the Insurgent Movement of 1909 - 1912," (unpublished Master's thesis, Drake University, Des Moines, 1949), pp. 43-44.

<sup>3</sup>Harrington, op. cit., p. 359.

<sup>4</sup>Iowa State Register, February 1, 1900, Allison Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. 503.

passed by men who were themselves closely associated with the trusts and interested in the perpetuation of the evils of trusts.<sup>1</sup>

Cummins' concept of the role of government was related to his tariff views since he believed that, "whenever a monopoly is attained in any protected commodity, that, pending the maintenance of the monopoly, the tariff duty upon it should be suspended, to be again imposed whenever substantial competition appears."<sup>2</sup>

The Iowa Governor's devotion to the rights of the common people over the rights of corporations undoubtedly reflected the influence of the democratic society in which he grew up in Ohio and Pennsylvania.<sup>3</sup> The family history was simple, in the style of the American ideal of humble beginnings. His father had been a farmer, carpenter, and contractor. Albert was the oldest of eleven children and learned carpentry while attending school. He was a student at Waynesburg College, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania for three years, working his way as a carpenter, farm hand and school teacher. At nineteen, he borrowed fifty dollars from an uncle "and started west to make his fortune."<sup>4</sup> Following this, Cummins held jobs as carpenter, express

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to Lyman Abbott, November 12, 1902, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Harrington, op. cit., p. 342.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

office clerk, assistant surveyor of Allen County, Indiana, and finally division engineer of construction for the Cincinnati, Richmond, and Fort Wayne Railroad.<sup>1</sup>

In a Chautauqua address, Cummins described the common people as having no other interest in government except that which was shared by "all their fellows." He asserted: "They are the men and women to whom the laws of the land can grant no peculiar advantage."<sup>2</sup> Cummins did not consider himself to be a "man of the people in a social sense" inasmuch as he entertained the new and old elite of Des Moines and was associated socially with prominent central Iowa families.<sup>3</sup>

Many times in the days of the popularity surrounding the "Iowa Idea," Cummins was accused of being a demagogue and using the allure-ment of tariff reform and appeal to the masses over corporate wealth as a facade to achieve notoriety and fame.<sup>4</sup> Such accusations were probably bound to be charged however, to any Republican who would voice different, and potentially challenging opinions, to the firmly entrenched "Standpat" element.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 343.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 360-61.

<sup>3</sup>Acree, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>George W. Dunham to Allison, October 30, 1902, Allison Papers, Vol. 346.

Thus a variety of forces were, and had been at work, in the shaping of the Iowa Governor's "progressive" views. Some of these forces were to be constant reference points as Cummins moved into the central political arena of the Iowa Governorship where he gathered more adherents, and opponents, and began to be a greater "problem" for the "Standpatters."

## II. THE 1901 PLATFORM

In 1901, the Republicans of Iowa incorporated statements into their state platform that proved to be the cause of much difficulty and provided the basis for the "Iowa Idea." The Tariff and Trust Resolutions of that platform asserted:

That we stand by the historic policy of the Republican party in giving protection to home industries and point for its ample vindication to the extraordinary rapidity with which our national resources have been developed and our industrial and financial independence secured. We favor such changes in the tariff from time to time as become advisable through the progress of our industries and their changing relations to the commerce of the world. We indorse the policy of reciprocity as the natural complement of protection and urge its development as necessary to the realization of our highest commercial possibilities.

That we assert the sovereignty of the people over all corporations and aggregations of capital and the right residing in the people to enforce such regulations, restrictions or prohibitions upon corporate management as will protect the individual and society from abuse of the power which combinations of capital wield. We favor such amendments of the interstate commerce act as will more fully carry out its prohibition of discrimination in rates and



any modification of the tariff schedules that may be required to prevent their affording a shelter to monopoly.<sup>1</sup>

The final section of the platform, concerning the tariff being adjusted to prevent its being used as a "shelter to monopoly" was the most controversial part of the resolutions and came to represent, in most minds, the "Iowa Idea." The actual name, as given here, was attributed to a reporter named Walter Wellman. Wellman wrote two or three articles describing what Cummins was attempting to do with the Iowa platform as the "Iowa Idea."<sup>2</sup>

The platform had been written by George E. Roberts, publisher of the Fort Dodge Messenger. At the time of the writing of the Iowa Republican platform in 1901, Roberts was Director of the United States Mint. He had "assisted in writing several State platforms of the Republican party."<sup>3</sup> Roberts had made the subject of finance his specialty in the campaign of 1892 and had prepared many articles on the tariff.<sup>4</sup> The tariff planks were written in Senator Dolliver's hotel room, by Roberts during the 1901 Iowa Republican Convention in

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<sup>1</sup>George E. Roberts, "The Origins of the 'Iowa Idea,'" Iowa Journal of History and Politics, II (January, 1902), p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to D. A. Valentine, December 22, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 17.

<sup>3</sup>Leslie's History of the Republican Party (New York: Judge Publishing Company, 1902), p. 272.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Cedar Rapids.<sup>1</sup> The statements were approved by Dolliver and were "regarded as an expression of his views."<sup>2</sup>

In early September, 1901, Dolliver was enroute to Washington and stopped in Canton, Ohio to visit President McKinley. The latter had a copy of the Iowa platform on his desk and told Dolliver that he intended to include parts of it in his speech in Buffalo on September 5. The President "commended the tariff declaration asserting that tariff reform, especially through reciprocity agreement, was to be a feature of his second administration."<sup>3</sup> McKinley was unable to follow this plan because of his assassination after the Buffalo address. The Iowa platform was compatible with McKinley's views but in all probability did little to shape them. The President's ideas on the tariff and reciprocity were formed long before the "Iowa Idea" was enunciated.

In commenting upon the framing of the 1901 Iowa Republican platform, Roberts had urged that the language was intended to be a "liberalizing" influence without "proposing sudden or revolutionary changes."<sup>4</sup> He further stated:

a rigid policy of exclusion and isolation cannot be made  
the permanent policy of a great people possessed of the

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas R. Ross, Jonathan Prentiss Dolliver (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1958), p. 168.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Roberts, op. cit., p. 71.

natural resources and advantages with which the United States are endowed, and that it would be a fatal error to allow the policy of protection to be so interpreted.<sup>1</sup>

According to Roberts, the trust resolution was written "to be something more than a vague declaration which points to no specific abuse and promises nothing in particular . . . ." <sup>2</sup> Finally, he argued that the 1901 platform was not seeking so much to destroy monopoly as to protect society from the "evils of monopoly."<sup>3</sup> This point, as will be noted throughout the study, became an issue of deep contention between the two party factions. The "Standpatters," not always analyzing before speaking, boldly asserted that the 1901 platform meant using tariff revision to eliminate trusts. A careful reading of Cummins' and Roberts' statements on this point does not support the "Standpat" line of argument.

At the time of its enunciation, the platform elicited little dissent in the Republican press and Roberts has suggested that, if Republicans from other states were upset by what they might have thought to be departure from recognized party tenets, some restraining influence might have been expected upon the statements of McKinley

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

in Buffalo.<sup>1</sup> However, his speech had the "same spirit as the Iowa sentiment."<sup>2</sup>

That the Iowa platform did not seem to contain anything of great controversy was evidenced by the following Eastern editorial comments concerning the action of Iowa Republicans:

The platform presents no striking features, . . . . Protection and reciprocity, its complement, were all becomingly framed, admired and indorsed.<sup>3</sup>

As party platforms go in these days, this is a courageous, conservative and sane deliverance . . . .<sup>4</sup>

The controversy caused by the Iowa platform was primarily due to the interpretations put upon the wording. Governor Cummins endorsed the platform and in commenting about it later, stated:

A great many of our Republicans paid no attention to this part of the platform, and accepted it as one of those rhetorical flourishes which read well, but which are to be forgotten the moment the convention adjourns. I did not so treat it, but made it the subject of a good many speeches, . . . .<sup>5</sup>

As mentioned above, the ideas broached in the platform coincided with some of Cummins' previous statements.<sup>6</sup> When the Iowa

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 72-73.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial in the Newark News, August 9, 1901, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Fort Dodge Messenger, August 20, 1901, citing the New York World, n.d.

<sup>5</sup>Cummins to D. A. Valentine, December 22, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 17.

<sup>6</sup>See p. 9 for Cummins' remarks of early 1900.

Governor sought to amplify the platform in later speeches, the "Standpatters" began to question the 1901 statement and the interpretations put upon it.

The interpretations by Cummins came in many speeches made throughout the United States, as the Iowa Governor gained notice from his association with the cause of tariff revision. One galling statement, in the eyes of the "Standpatters" was made by Cummins in April, 1902, in a talk delivered in Minneapolis when he asserted that, "the consumer is better entitled to competition than the producer is to protection where the producer is a monopoly."<sup>1</sup>

On October 10, 1902, Cummins further elaborated his views in a speech to the Marquette Club of Chicago:

Protection is the essential principle of republicanism; but competition is the eternal law of industrial life. We should and will enforce both; but if temporarily wealth ignores the latter and erects itself into a monopoly, then the consumer has a better right to competition than the producer has to protection. Competition we must have; that of the Republic if possible; that of the World if necessary.

.....

The experience of the past few years, . . . has shown us that ambitious spirits are able to establish and maintain monopolies in some of the important products of industry, and with respect to these things it is self-evident that the tariff duties, in some measure, are a shelter, because

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<sup>1</sup>Roberts, op. cit., p. 74.

they deprive us of the opportunity to invite competition from other lands.<sup>1</sup>

Referring to the Iowa platform, the Iowa Governor suggested that:

The Republicans of Iowa say that when trade in any protected commodity reaches the point of a single producer, the tariff duty upon the commodity shall be suspended until the laws of business resume their rightful sway.<sup>2</sup>

Statements such as these served only to alarm the "Standpatters." They asserted that Cummins was a "tariff-ripper," "free-trader," and, most reprehensible of all, was espousing Democratic ideas. As will be pointed out further in the study, Cummins sought to define precisely what he was suggesting in his statements. Generally these ideas were not as radical as was imagined by many who read and heard his statements, but did not analyze them.

On October 6, 1902, Congressman Hull of Iowa stated that he did not know what the "Iowa Idea" meant because of confusing assertions by Iowa newspapers. He declared that if it stood for free trade, he was against it. If it meant revising the tariff along the lines of protection, he was for it.<sup>3</sup> Such confusion was typical, as many in Iowa and the nation sought to pin-point the meaning of the concept. The fact that the "Iowa Idea" could be interpreted in many different

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>J. A. T. Hull to Perkins, October 6, 1902, Perkins Papers.

ways only added to the confusion for those trying to untangle its real substance. Cummins sought to explain and delimit the term, trying to persuade his opponents that he was not the "ogre" they claimed. However, even he had difficulty with the "idea" as was evidenced by the following comment:

It is not easy to define the phrase, although in a general way it means this:

First, a revision of our tariff schedules, so as to make our import duties measure the difference between the cost of production here and in other countries; . . . reciprocity with foreign countries, whenever the arrangement will help our own people, whether it be in competitive or non-competitive products; . . . .<sup>1</sup>

One of the constant complaints of the "Standpatters" about the 1901 platform and the "Iowa Idea" was that it was a Democratic idea being used by Republicans. "The demand for revision comes from democrats and a few irresolute republicans who in one way or another look to the democrats to promote their political fortunes," declared the Burlington Hawk-Eye.<sup>2</sup> The newspaper also feared that tariff reform would upset the national economy.<sup>3</sup> Other examples of newspaper comments about the Iowa political situation will appear throughout the study. The opinions of the Hawk-Eye could easily be countered

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Myron Converse, February 6, 1905, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 17.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, June 5, 1902.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, June 27, 1902.

by consulting some of the pro-Cummins papers. Newspapers reflected the politics of the owner, editor, or reporter, and therefore, were seldom accurate in presenting both sides whenever they contained articles relating to Iowa politics.

### III. THE 1902 PLATFORM

In 1902 the "Iowa Idea" began to present more problems for the state Republican party. Arguments over reiteration of the 1901 platform in 1902 plus anxiety and questions about the interpretations of the 1901 platform began to be voiced by prominent party leaders in the state and in Washington, D. C.

In his inaugural address, Governor Cummins stated, in part:

The most manifest evil of these tremendous aggregations is their effect upon competition. Competition is the paramount law of industrial life. . . . every consolidation . . . narrows the field of competition.

I am not an ardent advocate of a general revision of the tariff; but I stand for competition, the competition of the Republic if possible, but of the world, if necessary. I regard the consequences of a monopoly, or substantial monopoly, in any important product as infinitely more disastrous than the consequences of foreign importations.

. . . we must keep our eyes steadily on the chief purpose of protection; viz., the employment, not of a part, but of all the men and women of America. This, I submit, is the spirit in which reciprocal treaties should be examined. If we can make a trade that will enlarge our market; that is to say, increase the amount of work to be done in the United States, the trade should be made, even though some particular industry is curtailed in its production. . . . Protection was established for man, not man for protection. Reciprocity that



takes without giving is an idle dream and a contradiction in terms; . . . .<sup>1</sup>

To many "Standpatters" the ideas presented in this inaugural were tantamount to heresy. Charges of "tariff-ripper," "free-trader" and Democrat were repeated with increasing vehemence and regularity. This was especially true as the Governor continued to speak throughout the nation, expounding his views on the tariff. The 1902 request for a change in the Iowa Republican platform of 1901 began to grow, and by 1903, this request had become a demand.

The anti-Cummins group often jumped to criticize Cummins' statements without realizing that his position was not as extreme as they believed. He was careful to remain a protectionist and to try to clarify his position. Part of the dilemma for the Iowa Governor was evident in a letter written to a supporter in Pittsburgh. He said that it was difficult to draw a line between protection as a principle and some of its applications, and to "make it perfectly clear that we can challenge some of the duties without impeaching the validity of the doctrine itself."<sup>2</sup> The opposition to Cummins charged that he was assailing the doctrine of protection, and in doing so, attacking true Republican doctrine. The Iowa Governor sought to justify, through

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<sup>1</sup>Reprint of Inaugural Address, January 16, 1902, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to W. P. Potter, November 1, 1902, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 3.

his many letters and declarations, his position and to assert that he was not doing injustice to any orthodox Republican tenet.

Speaking in Chicago in late 1902, Cummins suggested that Iowans did not hold that modifying the tariff was a "remedy for the trusts" but rather, "it was one of several steps necessary for the defeat of monopolistic trusts, and the maintenance of free competition."<sup>1</sup> Continuing this speech, he stated that tariff duties sometimes were a shelter because they prevented the chance for foreign competition in American markets. Regarding reciprocity Cummins declared: "Reciprocity is a bargain, and it is absurd to assume that the countries with which we must trade are either brainless or benevolent."<sup>2</sup> Cummins was urging that the United States would have to expect to give as well as take in making reciprocity treaties, but that reciprocity was necessary as part of the undertaking to restore competition. This, to many of the "Standpatters" was repugnant and unorthodox. Their counter argument was that the United States should not seek any trade arrangements in competitive products, and only limited reciprocity in non-competitive products. Even such limited arrangements were not to be undertaken until such time as great certainty existed that American prosperity would not be imperiled.

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<sup>1</sup>Speech to Marquette Club of Chicago, October 10, 1902, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Cummins continued explaining his views. Writing to the editor of Outlook magazine, the Iowa Governor said that he did not associate trusts with the tariff nor the remedy for the evils of the trusts with modification of tariff schedules. Rather, he argued, that if trusts became monopolistic, a menace to the business of the nation was created. This menace could be combatted through decreasing tariff schedules to restore competition.<sup>1</sup>

Speaking in Detroit to the National Reciprocity League in 1902, Cummins stated that "one can be an apostle of reciprocity without being a traitor to protection."<sup>2</sup> Following the line on reciprocity, he also stated, "that reciprocity as a policy is a method of destroying certain protective duties for the larger benefits that will accrue to the nation through enlarged markets; . . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The statements above by Mr. Cummins came after the Republicans of the state had reaffirmed the 1901 platform in their 1902 state convention. However, this reaffirmation was not accomplished without some difficulty as objections to the "shelter" plank were heard with increasing frequency and volume.

George E. Roberts discussed the possibility of modifying the 1901 platform with George D. Perkins, of Sioux City, an influential

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Lyman Abbott, November 17, 1902, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Des Moines Register and Leader, December 11, 1902, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Iowa Republican and publisher of the Sioux City Journal. Roberts stated that he had spoken with Cummins about the 1902 Iowa Republican platform and that Cummins wanted to make it strong. Regarding the parts of the platform that were criticized, Roberts said that Cummins

ought to be told just what objections exist to his proposals. Of course the main question is over the reference to "monopoly." While I don't see anything wrong with the disputed phrase in the last platform I have thought that we might make the language convey our ideas without using the word monopoly, or that it might be made more satisfactory than before. The Governor is disposed to place more importance upon the monopoly feature than I do.<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1902, Roberts wrote Congressman Lacey of Iowa, a "Standpatter." Roberts stated that Cummins desired to repeat the 1901 platform and that "I presume I will not be expected to go back on my own platform."<sup>2</sup> Lacey was opposed to reaffirmation and he argued for a rewording:

I think you could easily improve on last year's declaration, for I never liked the phraseology that led so many democrats and tariff reformers to quote it as the "admission of the Iowa republicans that the tariff was the Mother of Trusts" and "shelter to monopoly."

I have so long disputed this democratic doctrine that the tariff was the promoter of the trusts that I do not like to have our platform possibly susceptible of any such misconstruction. The plank in question does not justify the support of many of the things that have been said and attributed to it by our enemies and some of our friends.

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<sup>1</sup>Roberts to George Perkins, February 28, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>Roberts to Lacey, July 6, 1902, Lacey Papers, Vol. 252.

It could readily be remodeled so as to give no comfort to our opponents and yet convey the entire idea that you no doubt had in mind.

I do not believe the trusts were created by the tariff or that they can be killed by free trade, unless . . . free trade should kill any line of business and the trusts should go down in the wreck.

I should regret to see any contest over the platform in the State Convention and thank you for calling my attention to your views, and hope you have no pride of authorship as to this particular composition for I think you have written better platforms and can do so again.

Whilst tariff schedules are not sacred and were only made to be altered from time to time I feel quite sure that when we begin revision and "monkeying with the tariff" we will have the usual cessation of business all along the line and the hard times which usually if not invariably accompany that unpleasant though sometimes necessary surgical operation.

Tariff doctrines are not so important when we have nothing but state officers to elect, but with eleven Congressmen on the ticket our expressions on this subject assume great national importance.<sup>1</sup>

Lacey's reply embodied most of the conservative arguments against Cummins' views. Their arguments were: (1) Republicans were following and using Democratic statements on the tariff, (2) the economic life of the nation would suffer if the tariff were altered, although no specific evidence supporting this view was given, and (3) congressional elections were in the balance, thus outspoken ideas of tariff revision might "rock the election boat."

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<sup>1</sup>Lacey to Roberts, n.d., Lacey Papers, Vol. 252.

Notice should be drawn to the fact however, that Lacey did admit that tariffs might be altered from time to time which was a point of view at least in partial agreement with Cummins' ideas. Their differences were mainly as to when and how much; with Lacey fearing business cessation whenever revision was attempted and Cummins asserting such fears to be largely conjectural.

Roberts' reply to Lacey stated that attempts to revise the platform would undoubtedly create controversy. He said that between Governor Cummins' desire to have his views vindicated and opposing efforts for changing the trust resolution "we shall come into sharp conflict and unfortunately it will come along the lines of our factional division."<sup>1</sup>

The question of Iowa Republicans reaffirming their 1901 platform was discussed widely in the summer of 1902. Cummins received a letter in June stating that Senator Allison thought that "they should say about as they said last year."<sup>2</sup> The writer also stated that George Roberts felt that the tariff statement of the 1902 platform should go as far as could be done "without slapping the Congressional Delegation."<sup>3</sup> Senator Dolliver seemed to lean toward the Cummins' view but said nothing to offend either side.

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<sup>1</sup>George Roberts to Lacey, July 12, 1902, Lacey Papers, Vol. 252.

<sup>2</sup>W. T. Chantland to Cummins, June 25, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 5, File 18.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Roberts thought that efforts to modify the 1901 platform would be made at the 1902 Iowa Republican Convention by Iowa Congressmen. He said that they would seek to become members of the committee of resolutions, thinking that it would be "difficult to defeat a congressman for committeeship if his name was presented in the district caucus."<sup>1</sup> Thus by gaining membership on this committee, the congressmen would exercise some control over the deliberations and pronouncements concerning the 1902 platform. However, a Cummins' lieutenant, A. E. Kendall of Albia, thought that there was a great majority in favor of tariff reform in his district and "that if properly organized it can control the district caucus at the State Convention."<sup>2</sup>

The "Standpat" Hawk-Eye commented on the 1902 platform dispute by arguing that since there had been some disagreement over the meaning of the 1901 platform, "it had better be corrected so that this year, there can be no misunderstanding."<sup>3</sup> Later the same month, the paper urged that "... it would be wiser to accept the late Senator Harlan's advice to formulate general principles and leave to Congress the details of legislation."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>George Roberts to Cummins, July 22, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 5, File 20.

<sup>2</sup>A. E. Kendall to Cummins, July 23, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 5, File 20.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial in the Hawk-Eye, July 4, 1902.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Hawk-Eye, July 25, 1902.

The Cedar Rapids Republican argued against tariff revision to control trusts in an editorial which said:

We have monopolies. The greatest of them are not sheltered by any tariff. What tariff shelters the Standard Oil Trust? Not any. What tariff shelters the coal trust? Coal is on the free list. What tariff shelters the railway combines? We have no tariff protecting railways.

The trust question is to be solved through . . . legislation that will prevent exorbitant profits through combinations of capital in all industries protected and unprotected.<sup>1</sup>

Before the convention, some interest had developed in who would be the member on the resolutions committee from the Seventh district. The contest was between state Senator Berry and Lafayette Young, publisher of the Des Moines Capital. Young was in favor of modifying the 1901 platform and Berry was for reiteration. The Hawk-Eye said the situation appeared to favor Berry because of the influence of the pro-Cummins group; and in the same issue, from a later dispatch, announced the withdrawal of Young from the race.<sup>2</sup> "This is regarded as the end of the contest over last year's platform," said the paper.<sup>3</sup>

However, two members of the committee, Towner from the Eighth district, and Davis from the First, sought to eliminate the shelter

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, July 15, 1902.

<sup>2</sup>Burlington Hawk-Eye, July 30, 1902, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



clause in the committee meetings. They argued that the 1901 platform "was virtually a plea of guilty to the democratic charge that the tariff is parent of the trusts."<sup>1</sup> Berry from the Seventh district, and George Roberts countered that the 1901 statement was supported by most of the party; had stood the test of a campaign and that elimination would "put the party on the defensive and lead the people to believe that the party is changing front on the trust question."<sup>2</sup> Davis's and Towner's moves were unsuccessful and the 1901 platform was reaffirmed with the addition of the endorsement of Cuban reciprocity, probably an indication of the influence of the Cummins group. Both Iowa Senators voiced their approval of the platform as adopted.<sup>3</sup>

The Hawk-Eye, following the readoption of the 1901 platform, stated that the Iowa declaration was not composed of "glittering generalities," but was "terse and pointed," so that "there can be no doubt as to their meaning."<sup>4</sup> This assertion was undoubtedly aimed at Cummins to dissuade him from more platform "interpretations."

The Republican commented on the 1902 platform as being "eminently satisfactory to republicans."<sup>5</sup> However, the editorial

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<sup>1</sup>Cedar Rapids Republican, July 31, 1902, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Des Moines Register and Leader, July 31, 1902, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, July 31, 1902.

<sup>5</sup>Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, August 1, 1902.

asserted that by retaining the shelter plank, a useless move had been made because the resolution preceding that one said that the shelter plank was no admission that the "tariff was such a shelter."<sup>1</sup>

A "progressive" paper, the Fort Dodge Messenger, stated that the action of the Iowa Republicans was important because of the attempt to modify the 1901 position. The paper argued that "the defeat of the scuttle policy was so overwhelming that new emphasis is given to last year's declaration."<sup>2</sup> This newspaper was published by George E. Roberts and therefore, would hardly be inclined to make derisive comments about the 1901 and 1902 platforms since Mr. Roberts had written these statements.

The Register and Leader told its readers that the congressional delegation, especially Senator Allison had desired no contest in the convention. The paper declared that whatever differences existed among the congressional delegation, they desired reaffirmation to any conflict "that might engender bitterness in party ranks."<sup>3</sup> However, these declarations do not coincide with statements by George Roberts to George Perkins following the convention. Roberts asserted that Senator Allison wanted to avoid trouble but other members of the congressional delegation disliked the platform and the fact that

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Fort Dodge Messenger, August 1, 1902.

<sup>3</sup>Register and Leader, July 30, 1902, p. 1.

Cummins was favorable to it. Roberts had told the congressmen that to fight the platform would provide an issue for Cummins and tend to build him up.<sup>1</sup> No evidence was found regarding the role of any members of the congressional delegation resisting reaffirmation in the convention. However, some connection between them and Lafayette Young's attempt for a seat on the committee on resolutions from the Seventh district, opposing reaffirmation, would not be difficult to imagine.<sup>2</sup>

Roberts also told Perkins that he had discussed the Iowa platform with President Roosevelt in August, 1902, and that Roosevelt desired some congressional action relative to the subjects in the Iowa statement, prior to the presidential campaign. However, Roosevelt did not want to "advocate publicly without knowing what he was going to get."<sup>3</sup> As Roberts commented, the President could not work publicly for some action and "then fail to get it."<sup>4</sup>

The 1902 Iowa platform was far from pleasing to many prominent Iowa Republicans. Secretary Shaw wrote to Perkins that he regretted the publicity being given throughout the country by Republicans to the question of revising the tariff. Shaw was afraid that, having

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<sup>1</sup>Roberts to Perkins, August 23, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 27 for Roberts' ideas on the course some Iowa Congressmen might take at the state convention to thwart reaffirmation.

<sup>3</sup>Roberts to Perkins, August 23, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

aroused the nation to think revision was necessary, the Republicans would be unable to revise. He stated: "We have never revised to our advantage and have lost a Congress every time we have tried the experiment."<sup>1</sup> Shaw enclosed a copy of a letter he had sent to W. Cumback of Indianapolis, telling him that "the tariff as a remedy for trusts is a democratic doctrine."<sup>2</sup> Such an attitude was indicative of the misinterpretations placed upon Cummins' views and the "Iowa Idea." Cummins did not seek tariff revision as a remedy for trusts. In fact, the Governor made a distinction between trusts and monopolies saying all trusts were not necessarily monopolistic nor evil.

Shaw wrote Perkins saying that tariff revision and removal of duties as a remedy for trusts was to be made a campaign issue by Iowa Republicans. Shaw asked, "how an issue can be made on a proposition where both parties agree?"<sup>3</sup> This question and the statements above again demonstrated the preoccupation by many Republicans with the idea of Republicans using Democratic doctrines. Such preoccupation plagued many who questioned tariff revision. Congressman Hull wrote to Lacey that he was "sorry that the Iowa platform was of such doubtful character that it had to be explained" and that he was "inclined to

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<sup>1</sup>Shaw to Perkins, August 27, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Shaw to Perkins, September 6, 1902, Perkins Papers.

think the Governor does not find it very pleasant trying to make it square with straight Republicans."<sup>1</sup>

Further evidence of the developing factionalism within Iowa Republican ranks, following the readoption of the platform of 1901, was the withdrawal of David B. Henderson from the race for Congress in September, 1902. Henderson, who was Speaker of the House, telegraphed Senator Allison that he had decided he "was not in harmony with many of our party who believe that free trade in whole or part remedies the trust evil . . . ."<sup>2</sup> In a telegram to George Perkins, the Iowa Congressman stated:

Yes I have withdrawn from the race having satisfied myself that I am not in accord with my party in Iowa and a great many in the party in my district on the subject of handling the trusts by free trade in whole or part.<sup>3</sup>

Another viewpoint asserted that Henderson "declined to stand for re-election because he was 'too stalwart a protectionist to stand comfortably on the Iowa Republican Platform.'"<sup>4</sup>

Henderson's private secretary, J. W. Richards, wrote an article about the resignation which came to Cummins through Hamilton Holt, publisher of The Independent of New York. Richards contended that

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<sup>1</sup>Hull to Lacey, October 6, 1902, Lacey Papers, Vol. 252.

<sup>2</sup>Telegram from Henderson to Allison, September 16, 1902, Allison Papers, Vol. 346.

<sup>3</sup>Telegram from Henderson to Perkins, September 16, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>4</sup>Acree, op. cit., p. 36, citing "The March of Events," The World's Work, V (November, 1902), 2701.

Henderson resigned when the Cummins group insisted upon using the same party statement in 1902 as in 1901. He said this action generated friction which culminated in Henderson's resignation. Richards stated that Henderson would have antagonized the regular organization of Iowa because "he would have to combat the Iowa Idea 'which they had set up as the type and model of loyalty to the Republican party.'"<sup>1</sup>

An instance of the application of the 1902 platform to railroads came in the Register and Leader in an editorial commenting on the trust statement. The article argued that the platform meant "railway discrimination in favor of trusts should be stopped. . . . An advantage in freight charges is an illegitimate advantage, opposed to the public interest and condemned by honest railway management."<sup>2</sup> Although difficult to understand, in view of the widespread complaint of railroad discrimination against Iowa businessmen and farmers, this statement was one of the few times railroads were mentioned specifically. No evidence was found in the Cummins Papers indicating the Governor sought railroad regulation through the "Iowa Idea" in 1901 - 1904.

Following reaffirmation of the 1902 party statement, intra-party strife became more intense. The following editorial was

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<sup>1</sup>Hamilton Holt to Cummins enclosing article written by J. W. Richards, March 16, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 8, File 32.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Des Moines Register and Leader, July 29, 1902.

reasonably indicative of "Standpat" dissatisfaction:

Free traders will tell you that protection is robbery; that it weighs more heavily upon the farmer and the laboring man than any other class. What are such vaporings as these in the face of the treasury statistics as to farm values and savings bank deposits? None of these things could have been possible under a pernicious financial system.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, as the argument continued, its resolution by the opposing factions seemed remote. However, 1903 would bring a kind of reconciliation, although the seeming peace would be mainly on the surface with the rumblings of discontent only slightly muffled.

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, July 15, 1902.

## CHAPTER III

### THE 1903 PLATFORM

#### I. OPPOSITION TO THE PLATFORMS OF 1901 AND 1902

In November, 1902, Governor Cummins wrote to George Roberts about his political expectations for 1903. The Iowa Governor declared that he did not expect opposition to his renomination, but did anticipate attempts to control the state convention so as to "repudiate the last two platforms and surround me with circumstances as a candidate that would be exceedingly embarrassing."<sup>1</sup> Cummins suggested that Roberts write a series of articles to explain the theory of protection to the people.<sup>2</sup>

Among those who were critical of Cummins' views was George Perkins, the influential publisher of the Sioux City Journal. Perkins questioned the Governor's position on reciprocity. He interpreted Cummins' view as being opposed to placing duties higher than necessary for protection in order to reduce them through reciprocal trade agreements. He said this position left the United States no "trading capital" in negotiating such treaties. Further, Perkins contended, that if reciprocal treaties gave foreign producers equality of

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Roberts, November 27, 1902, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



opportunity in American markets, this would amount to free trade which Perkins thought was too radical. He urged that the position of the United States in concluding reciprocal trade agreements should be to "retain trading capital without jeopardizing reasonable protection."<sup>1</sup>

Cummins' views on reciprocity were also criticized by state Senator Molesberry who declared that the "shelter to monopoly" plank would be attacked with increased vigor and that he "could see no reason why it cannot be knocked out by the next state convention."<sup>2</sup> The Senator felt the tariff and reciprocity discussion was a serious mistake by any Republicans who were not allied with the Cummins group. His argument was, that to attack Cummins for his views made a martyr of the Governor. Molesberry urged: "If the opponents of the governor would let the fight seriously alone Cummins would have a hard time to keep his lines unbroken . . . ."<sup>3</sup>

In early 1903, the Hawk-Eye advised Iowa Republicans to write a platform that would not misrepresent any element but could be so worded that all Republicans could stand upon it.<sup>4</sup> Later the same month this newspaper stated that Secretary of the Treasury Shaw

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<sup>1</sup>Perkins to Cummins, December 14, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 27. Perkins' interpretation seems to be in conflict with Cummins' earlier statements on reciprocity. See p. 5 for Cummins' speech, September, 1901.

<sup>2</sup>R. J. Reaney to Cummins, December 18, 1902, enclosing article from Columbus Safeguard, n.d., Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 27.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, January 9, 1903.

wanted any tariff revision "to be a thing of intelligent consideration, . . . and not a wholesale cutting down of schedules with a view of 'killing the trusts' . . . ." <sup>1</sup> Such comments were indicative of increasing restiveness among Iowa Republicans as the 1903 state convention drew closer.

Not all Iowans, however, were opposed to Governor Cummins and his thinking regarding the tariff. In January, 1903, Senator Allison received a letter from a constituent urging that, "the party in power must do something with the tariff and the trusts or we shall suffer defeat . . . . I have heard the most emphatic talk in this direction from many of our best republicans." <sup>2</sup>

One of the principal reasons for apprehension among the "Standpatters" concerning Governor Cummins, was the threat that he might attempt to get the "Iowa Idea" before the Republican National Convention in 1904. As stated previously, the "Standpatters" considered national agitation for tariff reform as a threat to the nation's economy and to the continuation of Republican control of the federal government. The influential Iowa "Standpatter" J. W. Blythe wrote to Senator Allison in March, 1903, stating that Governor Cummins "had declared that he will carry the 'Idea' to the National

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, January 31, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> G. W. Samson to Allison, January 15, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 84.

Convention, and this announcement is likely to kick up a rumpus."<sup>1</sup> Blythe had been political manager for Senator Gear, Dolliver's predecessor, and was General Solicitor for the Burlington Railroad. He was considered to be one of the chief spokesmen for the "Standpat" wing of the party.

Earlier the same month Blythe sent Allison a copy of a letter from G. R. Struble of Toledo, Iowa. Struble argued that the Republican platforms of 1901 and 1902 sounded like Democratic utterances and that he wanted a platform of Republican principles and was tired of the "Iowa Idea." If Cummins could not run on that kind of platform, he should stand aside, said Struble.<sup>2</sup>

Blythe replied that Republicans should not move too quickly and needed the approval of the national administration before working against the "other side."<sup>3</sup> In sending Struble's letter to Senator Allison, Blythe had sought the influential Iowan's counsel, fearing "violent and acrimonious discussion" in combatting Cummins' position.<sup>4</sup> There was no evidence that Blythe's desire to enlist the Roosevelt administration against the "other side" ever materialized although, as will be noted later, Senator Allison's moves toward compromise

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<sup>1</sup>Blythe to Allison, March 18, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

<sup>2</sup>Blythe to Allison, March 15, 1903, enclosing copy of a letter from G. R. Struble, March 13, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

in Iowa did have Roosevelt's approval.<sup>1</sup>

Blythe subsequently reiterated his fears, writing Allison that, "Cummins is determined upon absolute control of our delegation to the National Convention next year with a view to getting some recognition, in the national platform, of his 'shelter to monopoly' idea."<sup>2</sup> Blythe concluded his letter by urging Allison to steer things to a middle course in order to avoid a complete split in Republican ranks in Iowa.<sup>3</sup> Allison had a reputation for being able to resolve differences through compromise. This suggestion to Allison undoubtedly had some effect, inasmuch as Allison, Blythe, and Cummins met in Chicago in April, 1903 to resolve their differences. More consideration to this meeting and its results will be found later.

In reply to Blythe's letter, Senator Allison wrote:

I think it is important to avoid a struggle in our State Convention. I believe it is wise for us all to have a moderate platform on the subject, or at least so moderate that Republicans of all shades of opinion can stand upon it, . . . . The essential thing both this year and next is to declare for protection, which is a cardinal policy of the Republican party, and also declare that this policy does not bind us to any particular bill or any particular law, but that these details must be left to the wisdom of a Republican Congress to work out.

It seems wholly unnecessary for us to have differences as to details, when it is impossible for us to put into a platform these details . . . .<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 73 for Roosevelt's letter to Senator Allison.

<sup>2</sup>Blythe to Allison, March 19, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Allison to Blythe, March 21, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

The tone of this letter was toward compromise and gave a fairly clear indication of the role Allison would assume in his April conference in Chicago with Blythe and Governor Cummins.

Another critic of Cummins' tariff views was Leslie Shaw, former governor and Secretary of the Treasury at the time. Shaw stated that if Cummins' views of the "Iowa Idea" were not modified, influence would be used to secure delegates to the state convention who would vote for the adoption of a platform expressing "Standpat" views on the tariff question.<sup>1</sup> The "Standpatters" would not oppose the renomination of Cummins, added Shaw, but they were determined to write the platform.<sup>2</sup> This message coincides with Cummins' apprehensions expressed to George Roberts in November, 1902.<sup>3</sup>

Thus the lines of battle were fairly well drawn between the two groups of Iowa Republicans. The "Standpatters" were not going to accept a restatement of the 1901 and 1902 platforms and were intent upon modifying the earlier tariff statements. The liberal group was showing no inclination to retreat from its position. The situation called for compromise and the indefatigable Senator Allison rose to the occasion to accomodate his squabbling Iowa political colleagues.

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<sup>1</sup>E. E. Ganbers to Cummins, April 9, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>See p. 36 for Cummins' ideas.

## II. COMPROMISE

In March, 1903, Blythe wrote to Allison that he had talked with Cummins and the Iowa Governor seemed to desire avoidance of controversy at the approaching state convention over the platform or the ticket. However, Blythe asserted, Cummins did seem to insist upon a definite expression about the "shelter to monopoly" idea. The Burlington conservative said that Cummins desired to meet and that Allison, Blythe, and Cummins should confer to work out differences, but the discussion would have to be "pretty definite."<sup>1</sup>

The conference between the three prominent Iowa Republicans took place in Chicago in the early spring of 1903. Blythe described the talk in a letter to Congressman Lacey, another "Standpatter," as follows:

Mr. Allison, Mr. Cummins and I had a very long talk, in which we discussed nearly every possible phase of the situation. . . . an adjustment can be had . . . on the following lines:

1. The platform to deal with the tariff and trusts entirely independent, . . . .
2. The tariff plank to follow historical lines; reciprocity to be affirmed in general language, and without any affirmation or negation as to whether it shall apply to competitive or only to non-competitive products.
3. The trusts to be dealt with along conservative lines . . . .
4. The friends of both sides to be exhorted to avoid any factional alignment in the Convention . . . .

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<sup>1</sup>Blythe to Allison, March 25, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

5. Senator Allison suggested that reference be had to the National Platform of '96 in defining the scope and purpose of protection, . . . . Both Mr. Allison and I agree that this does not give any color whatever to the "shelter to monopoly" idea, — the claim that it does being based solely on the use of the word "monopoly."<sup>1</sup>

Cummins' views of the meeting were somewhat different from Blythe's. The Governor wrote two letters to George Perkins, the Sioux City newspaperman, describing the conference. In the first, Cummins did not mention that Blythe attended, but said the agreement had the approval of Blythe since he was as anxious for peace as was Cummins. The Governor said that Allison and he felt Perkins should be advised of the proceedings because of Perkins' influence in the party and ability to make suggestions for proper phraseology. Mention was made of a draft of a suggested platform, but no copy of this draft was found in any of the papers of Cummins, Allison, or Perkins. Cummins declared that he had suggested use of the 1896 platform in place of the "shelter plank,"<sup>2</sup> thereby contradicting Blythe's statement that the suggestion originated with Allison. These opposing statements indicated that whatever peace might be achieved would be short because each side was unwilling to have the conference appear to be a retreat from former positions. Cummins said use of the '96 platform made the 1903 party statement stronger, and the "Standpatters"

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<sup>1</sup>Blythe to Lacey, April 6, 1903, Lacey Papers, Vol. 253.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to Perkins, April 7, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 34.

declared use of the '96 platform removed the odious "shelter plank." In other words, from their points of view, each side was claiming the advantage. The letter concluded with Cummins requesting that Perkins make frank suggestions on the proposed 1903 party statement.<sup>1</sup>

The Governor's second letter told Perkins that the meeting had been called to eliminate misconstructions of previous party statements, separate the trusts and tariff, and to make whatever concessions Cummins could fairly make.<sup>2</sup> Again, Cummins asserted that he had suggested the '96 platform in place of the "shelter" clause and that he had really wanted a declaration for reciprocity in competitive articles but had deferred to Allison's wishes to strike it from the draft.<sup>3</sup> Cummins did mention that Allison and Blythe had agreed completely to the proposed draft and that all desired Perkins' advice on the proposals. This was the only indication of Blythe's attendance at the conference given by Cummins and this could only be inferred from the wording of the letter. The Governor declared that his friends, Roberts, Byers, Funk, and Harvey Ingham had approved the draft.<sup>4</sup> Byers had been a member of the state legislature and Ingham was editor of the Register and Leader. Cummins

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to Perkins, April 16, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



concluded that "it would put me in a most unhappy position if changes were made that would alter the emphasis of our declarations."<sup>1</sup>

Cummins wrote to Allison in mid-April protesting the attempts of some newspapers to make it appear that the Governor had "surrendered and that all the things for which I have been standing are to be eliminated from the platform."<sup>2</sup> The Governor wanted to make certain that "when the platform is announced it will not bear the construction which is by some of these newspapers predicted for it."<sup>3</sup> He concluded by suggesting different wording and the possibility of a conference with Allison and Perkins over phraseology.<sup>4</sup> This second conference will be considered later.

Although Secretary of the Treasury Shaw was in Chicago at the same time, he did not attend the meeting. Shaw felt that Cummins had pushed him out of the governorship and further, that the Governor's views threatened to divide Iowa Republicans and "thus thwart Shaw's hopes for a favorite-son candidacy for President."<sup>5</sup> Shaw described the conference, however, in a letter to James Clarkson, former owner of the Iowa State Register of Des Moines, and a prominent Republican. His remarks were essentially the same as those of Blythe mentioned

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to Allison, April 17, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Acrea, op. cit., p. 4.

above<sup>1</sup> and Clarkson's reply indicated no sympathy for the Cummins' position when he declared, "the sooner such a man is retired from leadership in the party, much better for the party."<sup>2</sup>

The letters of the participants clearly indicate that the Chicago conference was a genuine attempt at harmony. The agreement reached, however, was apparently quite tentative and general, leading to more problems for Iowa Republicans when they tried to be more specific in their 1903 party declaration. Then factionalism was again evident because no group desired to appear as the loser as has been mentioned above in the Cummins' and Blythe letters. The biographer of Senator Allison believed that the main reason for the Chicago meeting was not to secure a good tariff statement, but to gain political advantage for each side.<sup>3</sup> The thinking of the "Standpatters" was that "if Cummins accepted the national platform which was in conflict with the state platform he would stultify himself; if not he would lose caste both in and out of the state."<sup>4</sup> This view, however, does not agree with Cummins' statement that the use of the national platform was his idea. The Iowa Governor would hardly have made this

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<sup>1</sup>Shaw to Clarkson, April 13, 1903, Clarkson Papers, Vol. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Clarkson to Shaw, April 15, 1903, Clarkson Papers, Vol. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Leland L. Sage, William Boyd Allison (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1956), p. 289.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

suggestion if he had regarded reference to the '96 platform as a trap. Cummins declared the '96 platform to be a reassertion of his views. He had written Postmaster-General Payne that use of this party statement would be a good expression, as it contained all of the ideas for which the Governor had been laboring.<sup>1</sup>

That the conference in Chicago had not adjusted all differences was indicated by the extensive correspondence between prominent Iowa Republicans in the spring of 1903. Congressman Lacey indicated his dissatisfaction with the results of the conference in a letter to Blythe. He told the Burlington conservative that he objected to the use of the phrase about "domestic monopoly" from the 1896 platform. Lacey felt that to use this term would provide the basis "for more Democratic speeches from Republican candidates."<sup>2</sup> Letters passed between Allison, Cummins, and George Perkins over the specific wording of the 1903 Iowa Republican platform. Cummins wrote to Perkins asking him to look over the proposals from the Chicago conference which Cummins enclosed, and for Perkins to state frankly his opinions. The Governor said that more appropriate language might be found, but that the party declaration should be "epigrammatic and sententious."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Postmaster-General Payne, March 21, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 4.

<sup>2</sup>Lacey to Blythe, April 7, 1903, Lacey Papers, Vol. 253.

<sup>3</sup>Cummins to Perkins, April 7, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 34.

Cummins concluded by saying he was working for peace in the convention and to add strength to the party.<sup>1</sup>

Perkins replied that he was generally agreeable to Cummins' suggestions,<sup>2</sup> but several days later sent a letter proposing some changes which, he felt, would avoid provoking differences.<sup>3</sup> Perkins had met with Allison over these proposals and the Senator agreed with their substance.<sup>4</sup> Two days later Perkins suggested to Cummins that the party declare: "We indorse the policy of reciprocity as the natural complement of protection. Reciprocity between nations is trade for mutual advantage, and both sides must give and take."<sup>5</sup>

Allison wrote Cummins that he had met with Perkins and Lacey and that he and Perkins had persuaded Lacey it would be best to omit the latter's proposal to revise the platform to state that there would be no tariff revision until after the Presidential election.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Perkins to Cummins, April 7, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

<sup>3</sup>Perkins to Cummins, April 13, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Perkins to Cummins, April 15, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

<sup>6</sup>Allison to Cummins, April 16, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 34.

Perkins told the Governor that the use of the '96 platform might be considered as a concession to Cummins by some Republicans. The Sioux City newspaperman suggested that Cummins try to discourage such ideas, as Allison was trying to achieve harmony and that the Senator's position was one of "considerable delicacy."<sup>1</sup>

Cummins replied to Allison and Perkins, proposing slightly different wording and urging that the platform would have to be as strong as it had been in 1901 and 1902. The Governor said the Chicago agreement was the basis for his suggestions and he felt Republicans should adhere closely to the ideas agreed upon there.<sup>2</sup> The letters that passed between the three prominent Iowa Republicans were principally concerned with the specific wording of the 1903 Republican state platform. Each was seeking to achieve a statement that would not offend any party group and would appear to give each side a declaration favorable to its position. Such a task would not be easily accomplished.

As mentioned earlier, Cummins had proposed that Allison, Perkins and he meet to resolve their differences.<sup>3</sup> This conference was held in Chicago in the spring of 1903. Senator Allison said

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<sup>1</sup>Perkins to Cummins, April 18, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 34.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to Allison and Perkins, April 20, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 5.

<sup>3</sup>See p. 45.

that he had met with Perkins and Cummins at Cummins' request in order to reconcile the Governor to the omission from the platform of a declaration which Allison felt was dangerous. Cummins had wanted the party to assert: "We believe that competition must be preserved in the industrial and commercial world and that all just power of government should be exerted to maintain it and to prevent monopoly."<sup>1</sup> Allison said he and Perkins were opposed to such a declaration, apparently feeling it to be too extreme for some of the conservatives whom they represented. After informing the Governor of their opposition, Cummins had asked for a conference. The conference was held and the statement was deleted.<sup>2</sup> Cummins' agreement to the deletion was an indication of his willingness to compromise in order to achieve harmony. The Senator added that the gossip about Cummins having surrendered absolutely, in return for being named vice-presidential candidate with Roosevelt was untrue, as Allison had "never exchanged a word with the Governor on the subject of the Vice-Presidency."<sup>3</sup> Finally Allison defended the tentative declarations that were to be proposed to the Iowa Republicans at the state convention in July.

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<sup>1</sup>Allison to Lacey, May 16, 1903, Lacey Papers, Vol. 253.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

The Senator declared:

We cover, . . . a fair statement of the Republican position on the tariff, . . . . Secondly, we endorse the policy of reciprocity in a general way without specific directions to congress as to what it shall or shall not do, . . . .<sup>1</sup>

Concluding, Allison said that he had no doubt but that Governor Cummins would maintain that "he had surrendered nothing."<sup>2</sup> However, the Senator felt that the principal question was a proper reciprocity statement and a proper and independent trust declaration. Allison stated that he considered such statements to have been achieved in the tentative declarations to be submitted to the Republicans of Iowa in July.<sup>3</sup>

Allison's account was correct in saying the conference was held at Cummins' request and the concluding part of Allison's letter was partially similar to Cummins' second letter to Perkins of April 16, 1903.<sup>4</sup> Cummins had declared that he desired to separate the tariff and the trusts which was the same thing Allison had been seeking. Seemingly, a modicum of harmony was to be found among the factional Iowa Republicans and events appeared favorable for a peaceful state convention. Such harmony did appear to prevail at the meeting, but was short-lived as evidenced by statements following

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>See p. 44.

the convention. Even prior to the state meeting there were signs that indicated the "peace of Chicago" was indeed tenuous.

### III. THE 1903 CONVENTION AND AFTERMATH

The Republicans of Iowa met on July 1, 1903 in Des Moines for their state convention. The meeting passed peacefully as was indicated by a comment from the Register and Leader: "Harmony was the order of the day, and the compromise platform agreed to weeks ago . . . was adopted by the unanimous vote of the delegates."<sup>1</sup>

The full text of the platform relating to the subjects of protection, reciprocity, and the trusts was as follows:

We reiterate our faith in the historic policy of protection. Under its influence our country, foremost in the bounties of nature, has become foremost in production. It has enabled labor to secure good wages and has induced capital to engage in production with a reasonable hope of a fair reward. Its vindication is found in the history of its successes and the rapidity with which our national resources have been developed and our industrial independence secured, and we heartily renew our pledge to maintain it.

Tariff rates enacted to carry this policy into effect should be "just, fair and impartial, equally opposed to foreign control and domestic monopoly, to sectional discrimination and individual favoritism," and must from time to time be changed to meet the varying conditions incident to the progress of commerce. Duties that are too low should be increased, and duties that are too high should be reduced.

We endorse the policy of reciprocity as the natural complement of protection. Reciprocity between nations is trade for mutual advantage and both sides must give and take.

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<sup>1</sup> Des Moines Register and Leader, July 2, 1903, p. 1.



Protection builds up domestic industry and trade and secures our own markets for ourselves, reciprocity builds up foreign trade and finds an outlet for surplus.

We approve the treaty with Cuba recently ratified as conferring substantial benefits upon both countries and urge that the remaining steps necessary to make it effective be promptly taken.

We believe that the large corporations, commonly called "trusts" should be so regulated and supervised both in their organization and operation that their evil tendencies may be checked and their evil practices prevented. In many instances they are efficient industrial instruments and the natural outcome of an inevitable process of economic evolution. We do not desire their destruction but insist that they shall be so regulated and controlled as to prevent monopoly and promote competition, and in the fullest measure subserve and advance the public good.<sup>1</sup>

The only part of the platform relating to any sort of railroad regulation declared that the further regulation of interstate commerce commanded the confidence and admiration of the Republicans of Iowa.<sup>2</sup> This statement appeared almost as an after-thought, indicating that railroad regulation was not an integral part of the "Iowa Idea."

The influence of Governor Cummins might be observed in the second and third paragraphs and of Senator Allison in the middle portion of the final paragraph. Cummins declared that "he stood on the platform as adopted," and Senator Allison commented that he

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<sup>1</sup>Iowa Official Register of 1904, (Des Moines: Secretary of State, 1904), p. 252.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

endorsed everything said in the platform because he believed it to be "sound and just as respects the application of the principles which the republican party avows and adheres to."<sup>1</sup>

Newspaper comment upon the 1903 Iowa Republican platform varied considerably. The Register and Leader told its readers that neither side had triumphed over the other, but that the "friends of the old platform have certainly obtained in the new all that they ever say or contended for in the old."<sup>2</sup> The editorial concluded that the "influence of Iowa has gone out for the third successive year in favor of a progressive industrial and commercial policy for the republican party. . . . There is no tariff-smashing programme. There is no threat to the business world."<sup>3</sup>

The same editorial quoted Governor Cummins at some length, as the Iowa leader clarified his position. Cummins said he was a decided protectionist and that if a man did not believe in protection, he was not a Republican. Continuing, the Governor said he did not challenge the Republicanism of anyone who differed from him on the application of the doctrine of protection. His concluding remarks asserted: ". . . this peace and harmony must be the peace of

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<sup>1</sup>Des Moines Register and Leader, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Register and Leader, July 2, 1903.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

mutual respect and toleration . . . and not the peace of subordination and subjugation."<sup>1</sup> The Register and Leader said such a statement was necessitated by the charge that Cummins had "recanted his utterances" and that his assertion was "in no way inconsistent with his position throughout the negotiations that preceded the convention."<sup>2</sup>

Two liberal newspapers commented upon the 1903 party statement in positive terms. The Spirit Lake Beacon told its readers that the platform "expressed in language unmistakeable, the sentiment contained in the platform of 1901 - 02 and in terms even more direct and explicit."<sup>3</sup> The Fort Dodge Messenger was somewhat closer to a correct expression when it asserted that although the convention was harmonious, "both wings of the party are claiming victory."<sup>4</sup>

Less complimentary opinion was given by the Cedar Rapids Republican when it declared that the Republican platform was not a statement which would engender pride but rather contained "meaningless verbiage" which might mean one thing to some men and other things to a different set of men. However, the paper felt that the "shelter" idea had been successfully defeated and said: "We have

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial in the Spirit Lake Beacon, July 3, 1903.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Fort Dodge Messenger, July 3, 1903.

gone far enough to know that the tariff is not the creator of trusts and that free trade is not the cure for them."<sup>1</sup> The article concluded by saying that the compromise platform was "a victory for sound republicanism . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

That harmony for Iowa Republicans might be rather short-lived was indicated by an article in the Hawk-Eye. This "Standpat" voice said that the platform was one upon which "Standpatters" could "comfortably locate themselves."<sup>3</sup> Commenting upon a speech given to the Republican State Convention by Congressman Robert Cousins of Iowa, the paper declared his statements to be a "bold utterance against the vascillating policy of tariff tinkering."<sup>4</sup> Finally the paper charged that Governor Cummins had not changed his position and that compromise and harmony "apply only to the platform and not to the individual preferences of the leaders."<sup>5</sup> However, the Governor was not the only prominent Republican who had not changed his position, for the conservatives were still intent in maintaining their interpretations of protection and reciprocity.

George Roberts, the man who had been so instrumental in the composition of the Republican state platforms of 1901 and 1902,

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, July 2, 1903.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Burlington Hawk-Eye, July 2, 1903, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

commented that the reciprocity position was even more favorable to the "Iowa Idea" than preceding statements. He added that the wording of the rest of the platform was "more acceptable to those who regretted the seeming admission that the tariff did afford shelter to monopoly."<sup>1</sup>

The Des Moines Capital stated editorially that the Iowa platform was now in harmony with the national Republican platform and that "there would seem to be no further occasion for differences."<sup>2</sup> Such statements proclaiming harmony and lack of differences contrasted sharply with other comments whereby "Standpatters" and liberals asserted that the platform was indicative of their respective positions. Obviously such a situation did not portray true harmony, but only peace of a superficial nature.

A very critical comment on the 1903 Iowa platform appeared July 11, 1903 in The Outlook. The magazine asserted:

The fact that agitation for revision of the tariff at the hands of Republicans has been carried on by a group within the party in Iowa, headed by Governor Cummins himself . . . has given this tariff plank peculiar prominence. . . . On the other hand, the statement of the platform regarding the way in which these changes should take place is enigmatic, . . . . To say that duties which are too high should be reduced is hardly more enlightening than to say that duties

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<sup>1</sup>Sage, op. cit., p. 290, citing Roberts, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Des Moines Capital, July 2, 1903. The Capital was published by Lafayette Young a strong opponent of Governor Cummins.

which ought to be reduced ought to be reduced. . . . The framing of such a statement which, when finally analyzed, means nothing more than "whatever is, is," may be recommended to the admiration of those who believe that political platforms are meant for phrase making — but to no others.<sup>1</sup>

A Minneapolis paper charged that the platform read "like the utterance of an uncertain man confronted with a condition about which he wishes to express no conviction because he has none, and yet is obliged to say something."<sup>2</sup> The paper continued by saying that the Iowa Republican declaration was a defeat for Cummins but not a victory for the conservatives since Cummins would keep expounding his views.<sup>3</sup>

In answering charges that he had surrendered to the conservatives of the party, Governor Cummins wrote: "I wanted Senator Allison and got him to agree with me, and this is the pretext for claiming I was forced to compromise."<sup>4</sup> However, this statement appears somewhat hollow when compared to Cummins' letter to Perkins wherein the Governor said Allison, Blythe, and Cummins had met with the idea of Cummins making "fair concessions" at their Chicago conference.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Outlook, Vol. 74, No. 11, July 11, 1903, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup>Minneapolis newspaper commenting on the 1903 Iowa Republican Platform, n.n., n.d., Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Cummins to E. N. Foss, July 3, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 6.

<sup>5</sup>See p. 44.

A Minnesota "progressive," F. J. Smalley of the St. Paul Dispatch did think that Cummins had surrendered and wrote Cummins accordingly. Smalley said his "heart went down into my boots" when he read a Washington story quoting Secretary Shaw as saying Cummins had "slid down the pole."<sup>1</sup> Three weeks later Smalley said he felt the action of the Register and Leader in getting behind the '96 platform made it appear that Cummins had surrendered.<sup>2</sup> Smalley was an extreme advocate of tariff reform. He often urged Cummins to make stronger statements arguing that he felt the Iowa Governor was not moving fast enough nor far enough with his tariff views.

Cummins sent a lengthy letter to Smalley answering the charges of surrender. He carefully analyzed the 1903 statement and asked Smalley to compare it to the 1902 party declaration. For example, the Governor asserted that in 1902 Iowa Republicans had said they favored changes in the tariff as necessitated by industrial progress, but in 1903 they asserted tariff rates must from time to time be changed. Cummins asked if the 1903 party assertion that tariff rates should be opposed to domestic monopoly was not as emphatic as saying tariff rates should not shelter monopoly? Regarding reciprocity, the Governor said the 1903 language urging that reciprocity between

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<sup>1</sup>Smalley to Cummins, May 16, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 36.

<sup>2</sup>Smalley to Cummins, June 8, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 10, File 37.

nations was trade for mutual advantage and a give and take proposition, was a great advance over the previous year. Cummins urged that mis-constructions had been put upon the Iowa declaration either by those who wanted more radical statements or by those who wanted to make the platform appear as a defeat for Cummins' opponents.<sup>1</sup>

Governor Cummins spoke to The Merchants and Bankers Association of Boston in December, 1903. He reiterated his support of the protective principle and opposition to tariff change for unimportant reasons. Specifically, Cummins asserted: "I believe profoundly in a system of protective duties upon imports, as distinguished from a system of duties for revenue only — otherwise known as free trade."<sup>2</sup> He continued by stating that he also believed profoundly that the system of protective duties, when carefully adjusted, should not be changed "either directly by revision or indirectly through reciprocal trade agreements for light or trivial reasons."<sup>3</sup> He concluded by arguing that the negotiation of the McKinley treaties did not adversely affect the nation's business or "arrest enterprise."<sup>4</sup> Obviously,

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to F. J. Smalley, July 6, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 6. See Appendix A for the essential parts of Cummins' letter.

<sup>2</sup>Speech to The Merchants and Bankers Association of Boston, December 12, 1903, Cummins Papers, Speeches, Box 30, File 119.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.



the Iowa Governor was trying to demonstrate for the conservative element in the Republican party, that he was not anti-tariff nor a free-trader.

J. W. Blythe wrote to George Perkins that the "arrangement" was "makeshift to bridge over the present campaign."<sup>1</sup> Blythe declared that Republicans, for the time being, were safe from the contradiction of using a platform which repudiated Cummins' views, or of using one which would be contrary to the convictions of the party. However, Blythe asserted: "The party means to speak and will speak decisively on the tariff question, and unless wise counsels prevail is it not to be feared that another and perhaps embittered conflict may soon be impending?"<sup>2</sup>

Blythe expected Cummins to reassert his views in a speech in Des Moines, September 26, 1903. In writing to Senator Allison, Blythe said that the Senator "was not the only one who indulges a curiosity as to the views Gov. C. will express in Des Moines on the 26th."<sup>3</sup> On the day of the speech, Blythe wrote to Allison that the Governor's speech was "not so violent as I had feared, but he says he sticks to the objectionable things he had formerly espoused."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Blythe to Perkins, July 6, 1903, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Blythe to Allison, September 16, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

<sup>4</sup>Blythe to Allison, September 26, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 349.

Thus, as the months passed following the 1903 Iowa Republican Convention and platform declaration, peace did not reign and the essential fact was, that despite all of the moves toward peace and harmony, nothing had actually been settled.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE 1904 SITUATION

#### I. PRE-CONVENTION PROBLEMS

In January, 1904, Governor Cummins was inaugurated for a second term. His inaugural address aroused a "hornet's nest" of comment and opposition. The Governor declared there could be no such thing as being "standpat" in the living world and the term really applied only to the dead. He devoted much attention to reciprocity, saying that there were two opinions on the subject. The first wanted reciprocity only in non-competitive products, but this was impossible, according to the Governor, since foreign nations would grant no substantial trade advantages on such a basis. The second opinion was that if a reciprocal bargain could bring more work to American labor, the bargain should be made even if some American manufacturer suffered.<sup>1</sup>

Cummins discussed Canadian reciprocity in detail, pointing out that United States' manufacturers had spent 100 million dollars in Canada within the last 10 years setting up plants there. He said this would not have been done if this country had had fair trade relations with Canada. Iowa especially had suffered, since the Iowa

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<sup>1</sup>Inaugural speech, January 14, 1904, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

farmer had lost the chance to feed the workers in these plants. Cummins declared the United States would have to admit Canadian agricultural products in order to gain markets and asked who would lose in the exchange?

Which would you rather do, lose the market which would be created by our vast imports into Canada or meet Canada in competition in things you produce? I assert confidently that in a sharp struggle with Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri, you would never be able to discern the influence of Canada in corn, oats, barley, hay, cattle, horses, hogs, butter and eggs.<sup>1</sup>

Cummins concluded his remarks on reciprocity by urging, "let us have the reciprocity of the 1903 platform."<sup>2</sup> Such statements would hardly accomplish any rapprochement with the conservatives, but would in fact, widen the breach, since the Governor had equated their position with the dead and had pleaded for greater reciprocity, especially Canadian reciprocity. In the view of the "Standpatters" the Republican duty was to protect American business, not seek its damage through foreign competition.

Congressman Lacey wrote to Blythe that since Cummins was declaring his "antics" to be within the 1903 platform, newspapers were criticizing the "innocent platform, . . . instead of the guilty constructors or misconstructors, of the same."<sup>3</sup> Lacey urged Blythe

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Lacey to Blythe, March 27, 1904, Lacey Papers, Vol. 253.

to write an editorial or issue a statement to "let up on the platform and attack its misconstruction."<sup>1</sup> The Iowa Congressman said that the 1903 platform should not be reaffirmed by Iowa Republicans in 1904 and proposed the following editorial:

The indignation with which the Governor's ill timed and worse tempered inaugural was received has practically eliminated his scheme of personally controlling the Iowa delegation to the National Convention. But many of the Republican papers in criticizing Gov. Cummins' declarations of his tariff views have done injustice by attacking the language of the platform of 1903 itself.

.....

The platform was drawn on conservative and Iowa Republican lines to meet a difficult situation.

But, without one word of criticism for that declaration of party principles, we insist that there is no reason for any reaffirmation of the language of last year.

.....

No one particular man's feelings are to be especially considered this year, but a general party declaration that will be in line with sound National Republicanism is all that is needed . . . . The Chicago convention, will . . . give us a declaration of principles which will be accepted by the party throughout the nation. There should be no attack on the platform of 1903. It is not in issue. Any false interpretation of the platform by Gov. Cummins should be charged to him and not to the platform.<sup>2</sup>

Lacey's suggestions were somewhat contradictory. In one paragraph he urged that no criticism of the 1903 platform was

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

intended, but then said there was no need for Iowa Republicans to reaffirm that statement. If there was no criticism of the 1903 party declaration, why was there any need to change the platform? Actually, Lacey was opposed to the 1903 statement and was anxious to have a new platform in terms more to his conservative liking.

The result of Lacey's suggestions was an editorial which appeared in the Hawk-Eye, April 1, 1904. This article declared that Cummins, while holding peculiar views for a Republican, had gone through the state convention and campaign of 1903 without breaching the party peace up to the time of his inaugural speech. Then, the paper asserted, the Iowa Governor had enlarged his tariff views, wanted wider relations with Canada, denounced non-competitive reciprocity, and insisted that all such statements were within the 1903 platform. The Hawk-Eye declared, however, that the responsibility for these statements lay not with the platform but with Governor Cummins, whose interpretations had led some Republican newspapers into an unjustifiable denunciation of the platform. The paper continued by urging that the 1903 platform was, "a deliberate, carefully considered and authoritative statement of republican faith." The Hawk-Eye declared that attempts by Governor Cummins to "color" the platform "with the dyes of his own perverted notions," could not "prevail against its words," nor "against the absolute guarantee of Senator Allison's endorsement." The Burlington paper argued that Senator Allison had

identified his name with the platform, "and if he does not know what republicanism is, who does?"<sup>1</sup>

A Mount Pleasant citizen wrote to Cummins of the opposition to Canadian reciprocity in his part of the state. The writer declared "that the farmers here are opposed to Canadian reciprocity, and generally speaking to any reciprocal arrangement in competitive products."<sup>2</sup> Mount Pleasant was in a part of Iowa under the influence of Blythe and the Hawk-Eye. The anti-Cummins attitude might have been an indication of the effect of this influence.

George Perkins wrote an editorial commenting adversely upon the inaugural speech as being "inopportune" and reopening the factional wound in Iowa Republicanism. Cummins reacted by stating he had seen Perkins' editorial calling the inaugural "inopportune" and asked why Republicans should not discuss the subjects which the platform must include? The Iowa Governor believed the platform should indicate to the people that the second session of Congress would take up tariff revision in order to reduce schedules that were too high. He also felt the Republican view of reciprocity should be clearly stated. Finally, the Governor asked: "How are we to bring any influence to

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, April 1, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Rogers to Cummins, April 8, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 52.

bear upon the consideration of the platform if we do not discuss the matter?"<sup>1</sup>

Defending his stand upon Canadian reciprocity, Cummins wrote to a Muscatine voter: "You know I am not in favor of free trade with Canada. I am simply in favor of making a good trade with Canada if we can, and if we cannot, we will make none."<sup>2</sup>

Many Iowans wrote to Cummins praising his inaugural speech. One supporter wrote that he approved of the Governor's assertion that one could not be "standpat"; that humanity either progressed or retrogressed, but could not stand still.<sup>3</sup> Continuing, the writer said the Republican national platform of 1904 would have to declare for tariff reform to save the Republican party four years hence; and in order "to save it this year, . . . ."<sup>4</sup> Another Iowan wrote that he could not understand how the United States could prosper, develop or expand without foreign imports and without other nations having American imports?<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Perkins, January 30, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Cummins to John Kemble, January 30, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>3</sup>O. J. Jolley to Cummins, January 15, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 12, File 47.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>James Van Orsdol to Cummins, January 24, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 12, File 48.



Always trying to clarify his position so that he would not appear to be the iconoclast suggested by the "Standpatters," Cummins wrote in late 1903:

I reiterate that tariff laws, founded upon the policy of protecting home markets, are not only of the highest efficiency but of the strictest national morality and I have little patience with the theorist who bases his objection to such laws upon the proposition that they contravene natural rights.

.....

Trusts are very many, monopolies are very rare, and he who does not distinguish between them is a poor guide in the labyrinth of modern affairs. He who would destroy all the so-called trusts in order to disintegrate the occasional monopoly, has given little thought to the gravity of the undertaking, and he who, believing in protection at all, would abolish the duty on all trust-made goods because the trust may ripen into a monopoly, would remain childless lest his offspring may become criminals.<sup>1</sup>

Cummins elaborated his position on reciprocity in an article in the Americana encyclopedia. He asserted that reciprocity between nations did not require the same items from each country to be included in the treaty; nor did it require that each nation prescribe identical duties. "While . . . the thought of equivalency of concession or privilege is not absent, it is a matter of judgment rather than mathematics," declared the Governor.<sup>2</sup> These words should have

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<sup>1</sup>Reprint of article appearing in American Industries, November 2, 1903, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup>Reprint of article for Encyclopedia Americana by the Register and Leader, n.d., Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. II.

given some reassurance to the conservatives since the tone was far from radical, and in fact, seemed close to their position. The continued opposition to Cummins indicated some possible personal enmity in addition to dislike based upon Cummins' views.

Blythe contacted George Perkins regarding the approaching Republican national convention. Blythe said that harmony efforts should continue and that suggestions had been made to Cummins that the delegation-at-large be divided between "his friends and ours. The effect . . . however, was that the Governor said the fight was one for control and that he would win or lose on that issue."<sup>1</sup> Blythe declared that this was unfortunate, but even if the Governor did not compromise, he should still be a delegate-at-large. The "Stand-patter" said Cummins wanted to be a delegate not to approve a platform suitable to Roosevelt but "to attempt to incorporate into the platform an idea which would otherwise not be found there."<sup>2</sup>

That Cummins did intend to get his tariff views into the national platform was indicated by a speech to the Republicans of Polk County in 1903. The Iowa Governor declared that he intended to do whatever was within his power to introduce into the national platform of 1904, the ideas which had already been expressed by the

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<sup>1</sup>Blythe to Perkins, January 19, 1904, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

Republicans of Iowa in their state platform. He tempered that remark, however, by stating: "I again record my belief that the modification of the tariff schedules is not the remedy for whatever evils these vast concentrations . . . contain . . . ." <sup>1</sup> Cummins' speeches suggested that the trust evils could be dealt with adequately through appropriate regulatory legislation. From such assertions the apprehensions of the conservatives concerning the national platform were understandable, since the language of Cummins' declarations was clear in its intent.

Writing to George Perkins, Cummins stated that the national platform would either say to the people that Republicans would re-examine the tariff schedules or else it would say nothing on that subject. Cummins argued that he did not care what the words were but did want to pledge the party to tariff re-examination. Regarding reciprocity, the Iowa Governor said that Republicans should either declare that they believed in reciprocity to enlarge American markets or else declare reciprocity to be obsolete. He concluded by asserting he did not "favor any radical utterance in our platform, . . . ." <sup>2</sup> Obviously, however, these proposals would be radical to many conservatives and arouse heated opposition.

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<sup>1</sup> MSS copy of speech to Polk County Republican Convention, 1903, Cummins Papers, Telegrams and Speeches, Box 29, File 119.

<sup>2</sup> Cummins to George Perkins, February 19, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

That the opposition did plan to thwart Cummins' intentions was indicated in an article in the Rock Island Argus. The paper stated that the plan of the anti-Cummins Republicans was to use "oral and printed gossip" to make Cummins' views appear to be out of line with the national administration and that he "should not represent Iowa Republicans in Chicago . . . ." <sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt's attitude toward the situation in Iowa was ambivalent. In early 1903, A. B. Funk of Spirit Lake had conferred with the President and reported to Cummins that Roosevelt was friendly to him, and in private conversation was interested in tariff reform, and the extension of American trade relations. However, Funk continued, the President, even though he evidenced contempt for "standpatism" was "under the pressure of great party and national necessity . . . to be diplomatic to the extent necessary to keep in working relations with congress and the party leaders." <sup>2</sup>

In a speech reported in the New York Sun, May 12, 1903, Roosevelt's assertions on the tariff issue were closer to the views of the conservatives than to those of the reformers. Roosevelt spoke of sweeping and violent changes in the protective tariff as

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<sup>1</sup>Rock Island Argus, February 19, 1904, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup>A. B. Funk to Cummins, February 2, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 8, File 31.

being disastrous in any event, "and they would be fatal to our present well being if approached on the theory that the principle of the American tariff was to be abandoned."<sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt desired harmony above all, and communicated his pleasure with the compromise that Senator Allison seemingly achieved in Iowa in 1903. He wrote Allison that he was "very glad of what you tell me about the harmony in Iowa. This is very important."<sup>2</sup> The contradiction of Roosevelt privately leaning toward Cummins' views but publicly not appearing too warm toward them was attributable to his desire for peace and smooth congressional relations, and his presidential ambitions in 1904. A Minnesota supporter of Cummins wrote that he was not pleased with the President's apparent attitude on the tariff or reciprocity, but was convinced, "if left to himself and not terrorized by the 'Senatorial Junta,' he would be allright."<sup>3</sup> Roosevelt was straddling the fence; seeming to lean toward the status quo publicly, but privately showing more warmth toward tariff reform. He was not always consistent and "local hopefuls" discovered that sometimes it was necessary to fit their views to Roosevelt's. These "hopefuls" found the task to be a test of their ingenuity but required, in view of the pre-eminence of Roosevelt and of their tendency to

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<sup>1</sup>New York Sun, May 12, 1903, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Roosevelt to Allison, April 28, 1903, Allison Papers, Vol. 84.

<sup>3</sup>W. D. Washburn to Cummins, June 24, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 10, File 37.

accept his word on party matters as infallible.<sup>1</sup> The position of the President was "to talk tariff revision firmly enough to frighten the old guard, but gently enough not to alienate them."<sup>2</sup>

Prior to the 1904 Republican state convention, Perkins, Allison, Cummins, Blythe, and Roberts engaged in numerous maneuvers to influence the make-up of the Iowa delegation-at-large to the national convention. Cummins told Perkins he had two reasons for declining to make any prearrangements regarding the delegation to the national convention. The first was that any prearrangement would merely make the state convention a "rubber stamp" and stifle discussion, and second, the Governor had no faith in the "other crowd." Cummins said Blythe wanted to make the Governor appear as a disturber so he could more easily be "disposed of."<sup>3</sup> Two weeks later, Cummins told Perkins he was agreeable to Senators Allison and Dolliver for delegates-at-large and although he did not want strife, he would not confer with Blythe "or any of his crowd" on the personnel of the delegation.<sup>4</sup> Cummins' refusal to have anything to do with Blythe was probably due to the

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<sup>1</sup> Acrea, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., citing John M. Blum, The Republican Roosevelt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> Cummins to Perkins, January 30, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Cummins to Perkins, February 19, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

fact that the Governor felt he had been betrayed by the conservatives. Cummins believed the "Standpatters" had purposely misconstrued his public statements on the 1903 platform and made him appear as a challenge to recognized Republican beliefs. The Governor wanted the state convention to remain open in regards to the delegation-at-large and Blythe wanted the matter settled before the convention met.

Perkins told Cummins that he was pleased at the Governor's approval of Senators Allison and Dolliver as delegates-at-large and hoped Cummins would get along with Blythe for the sake of harmony and to serve the President's interests.<sup>1</sup>

Roberts told Perkins that the Governor was willing to permit the withdrawal of one of his supporters, A. B. Funk, as a candidate for delegate-at-large if last year's platform were readopted. The Director of the Mint said this would leave no reason for conflict and hoped Blythe would approve.<sup>2</sup> Perkins wrote Blythe suggesting reaffirmation of the platform and that both Cummins and Blythe groups should

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<sup>1</sup>Perkins to Cummins, February 23, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 49.

<sup>2</sup>Roberts to Perkins, February 25, 1904, Perkins Papers. This view is not supported by information in the Letterbooks of Governor Cummins. In writing to Funk, Cummins declared his disappointment at Funk's withdrawal, but that he would not try to interfere in whatever course Funk considered best. See p. 77.

be represented at the national convention.<sup>1</sup> Allison wrote urging a similar course, arguing that Iowa Republicans would risk condemnation if they changed or repudiated the 1903 platform. The Senator said the people had become aroused because Cummins had sought to fight for his "peculiar ideas" which were not in the 1903 statements and now the conservatives had a majority in the state convention. However, Allison declared the conservative majority should still be generous to the liberal minority.<sup>2</sup>

Blythe's reaction was to argue for general reaffirmation "of adherence to policies enunciated in repeated party declarations" rather than an "express reaffirmation."<sup>3</sup> However, Blythe's opposition to reaffirmation of the 1903 platform did not coincide with the report Roberts made to Perkins. The Director of the Mint said Blythe had agreed to accept the withdrawal of the Cummins' man, Funk, from candidacy for delegate-at-large in return for supporting readoption of the 1903 statement, whereupon Funk had withdrawn.<sup>4</sup> Roberts declared that distinct repudiation of the platform by direct attack now, would be a most unfortunate situation.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Perkins to Blythe, March 20, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351.

<sup>2</sup>Allison to Blythe, March 25, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351.

<sup>3</sup>Blythe to Allison, April 8, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351.

<sup>4</sup>Roberts to Perkins, March 25, 1904, Perkins Papers.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.



Cummins wrote to one of his advisors, following Funk's withdrawal, saying that this action would have a depressing effect upon the contests taking place in the districts throughout the state and that the Governor was also inclined to withdraw as a candidate for delegate-at-large. Cummins further declared that the state convention would now try to send him as a delegate out of courtesy to his office and this would only be more humiliating. Cummins thought such action would rob him of influence and he would be merely a "cipher in the delegation, subject to . . . misrepresentation."<sup>1</sup> Finally, Cummins asserted, some of his friends would think the control of the state convention by the conservatives was a compromise engineered by the Governor to quiet other elements in the party, but his withdrawal as a candidate for delegate-at-large would allay such suspicions.<sup>2</sup>

Cummins told Funk, after the latter's withdrawal, that he did not desire this action unless Funk felt that was the only way to avoid defeat at the state convention. Cummins declared that he did not wish to go to the national convention as a captive of the Blythe machine and he hoped to withdraw as a candidate for delegate-at-large

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Tom Way, March 17, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

and spend his time correcting many of the misrepresentations in the press.<sup>1</sup>

Funk replied that misrepresentations had given the advantage to the conservatives but for the Governor to retire would deepen the factionalism. Funk urged Cummins not to withdraw as he might have some influence, especially if the liberals concealed their wounds and worked good naturedly. Funk speculated that perhaps the liberals had miscalculated in pushing for tariff reform since the people were inculcated with protection and the conservatives had made Cummins appear as working against protection. He concluded by saying: "I beseech you as a friend and as a fellow worker in the political field to accept on the delegation the place open to you . . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Early 1904 was a period of distress and discouragement for Cummins. In his home district, the Governor had suffered defeat when it became certain that J. A. T. Hull, a "Standpatter" would be renominated for Congress. The campaign had been bitter and Cummins felt he had been completely misrepresented by the conservatives. A further aspect of this time of difficulties was the Governor's poor health. He was forced to leave his office for about a month at the very time when he needed his strength to combat the forces ranged against him.

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Funk, March 17, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Funk to Cummins, March 18, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 51.

Thus the liberals were not in control in 1904. By making Cummins appear as an enemy of protection, a reaction to the Governor's views had developed and this, coupled with the conservative moves in the district Republican conventions, had brought about "Standpat" control of the state convention.

Cummins wrote to his friend, F. J. Smalley of St. Paul, regarding the somewhat bleak prospects for the liberals. The Governor contended that he had made no compromise last year and did not imagine that "malignity even could put upon what I did the complexion it has since born."<sup>1</sup> He said he had now learned never again to have any "prearrangements" with the "other crowd." Cummins concluded by saying: "It looks now as though the real sentiment of Iowa would fail of expression but I have infinite confidence that if it fails now it will be still more emphatic later on."<sup>2</sup>

Perkins sent Allison an article from the Sioux City Journal describing the Iowa political scene. The paper stated: "So far there has been no serious outbreak in opposition to the harmony programme of naming the senators, the governor, and Mr. Blythe as the four delegates at large."<sup>3</sup> The Journal declared there had been

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Smalley, March 14, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Perkins to Allison, April 21, 1904, enclosing article from the Sioux City Journal, Allison Papers, Vol. 353.

rumors that insistence upon reaffirmation of last year's platform would endanger the chances of electing Cummins as a delegate-at-large. "As the case stands, the delegates at large will be as suggested, unless it should happen that the governor declines to accept the courtesy at the hands of Mr. Blythe," concluded the paper.<sup>1</sup>

The mood of many Iowa Republicans as they approached the 1904 state convention to frame a party declaration and select delegates to the national convention was expressed by a voter in a letter to Senator Allison. The writer declared: "We want no 'Iowa idea' or Canadian reciprocity or 1901 or 1903 platform or any other compromise brought up to discourage . . . loyal . . . republicans."<sup>2</sup>

## II. THE 1904 STATE CONVENTION

H. W. Byers, a Cummins' supporter, wrote to the Iowa Governor about the approaching state convention and the selection of the Iowa delegation to the national convention. He said that since Blythe was opposed to having the Iowa delegation to the national convention instructed as to what the national platform should say, the liberals had a "splendid opportunity to insist upon an endorsement of the tariff and reciprocity plank of 1903."<sup>3</sup> Further, Byers said the delegation

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>C. J. Johnston to Allison, April 7, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 352.

<sup>3</sup>Byers to Cummins, March 3, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 51.

should be instructed to support a man for the committee on resolutions who would present such a plank to the committee. Byers felt that if the liberals were defeated in these moves they would have embarrassed the conservatives by compelling them to repudiate the 1903 platform.<sup>1</sup>

Another friend of Cummins had written to him about the state platform. G. M. Curtis of Clinton told the Iowa Governor that after Curtis had talked with Blythe in Chicago, Blythe had no objection to the party making a "strong expression" similar to that of 1903 "if couched in different language."<sup>2</sup>

Commenting upon the approaching Iowa convention the Hawk-Eye stated: "The differences that have agitated the party as to the declaration of principles will not be in evidence; . . . ."<sup>3</sup> Four days later the southern Iowa paper declared that the "great bulk of the counties have come into line, and present a practically unbroken front against the little coterie who stand for 'tariff-ripping.'"<sup>4</sup>

The Spirit Lake Beacon told its readers that at the Republican state convention, the 1903 party platform would not be given any recognition. The paper asserted, however, that this situation was not due to the platform containing any "political heresy," but because

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Curtis to Cummins, March 24, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 51.

<sup>3</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, May 11, 1904.

<sup>4</sup>Editorial in the Burlington Hawk-Eye, May 15, 1904.

"respectful treatment might be construed into some remote compliment to Governor Cummins."<sup>1</sup>

The Iowa State Republican Convention was held in Des Moines, May 18, 1904. The Fort Dodge Messenger reported:

Iowa's long fight between "standpat" Republicans and liberals on the issue of tariff revision and reciprocity ended in complete victory for the former in the state convention for selecting delegates to the national convention. Of twenty-six delegates chosen, twenty are standpatters and six are liberals. The resolutions adopted contain no sentiment whatever in favor of tariff revision, but declare that the protective principle "found its high fulfillment" in the Dingley law. As to reciprocity, the platform declares that "it is unwise to seek markets abroad by sacrificing some parts of the markets at home."<sup>2</sup>

The Register and Leader reported that George Perkins had offered a more liberal tariff plank to the committee on resolutions at the convention. Perkins' suggestion urged that "tariff rates should be changed from time to time by the friends of the policy and not by its enemies whenever necessity for change shall arise."<sup>3</sup> However this move was defeated since "the standpatters had eight members of the committee on resolutions."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in the Spirit Lake Beacon, May 6, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Fort Dodge Messenger, May 20, 1904, p. 1. See Appendix B for those portions of the 1904 Iowa Republican Platform relating to the tariff, reciprocity, and trusts.

<sup>3</sup> Des Moines Register and Leader, May 19, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Editorially, the Register and Leader commented:

The flat declaration at this time that Iowa denounces any reciprocity whatever in competitive products cannot be construed as other than a repudiation of the Cuban treaty that President Roosevelt so urgently demanded and as a severe criticism of Senators Allison and Dolliver for supporting it in the senate, as well as of the entire congressional delegation which voted for it in the house. Such a declaration is also a repudiation of the Kasson treaties which McKinley sent to the senate with his approval . . . .<sup>1</sup>

The Cedar Rapids Republican said the resolutions adopted were to be regarded as "a happy solution of the contest in Iowa republicanism. They are not radical but they contain elements of republican protection."<sup>2</sup> The next day the paper declared that the "tiresome factional fighting in the party may now be regarded as a closed incident."<sup>3</sup> However, as events were to prove, the "incident" was not closed yet.

The Hawk-Eye asserted that "harmony reigned supreme . . . ."<sup>4</sup> Continuing in the mood of triumph, the Burlington paper declared: "The republicanism of McKinley, of Blaine and of Roosevelt without blemish and without apology is written . . . across the record of every action taken by the gathering."<sup>5</sup> The paper reported Governor Cummins' comments about the tariff plank in the platform. According

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in the Register and Leader, May 19, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, May 19, 1904.

<sup>3</sup> Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, May 20, 1904.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial in the Hawk-Eye, May 19, 1904.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

to the "standpat" voice, he declared: "The other fellows had a majority of the convention," but "I am a loyal party man and am bound by that platform. I do not care to discuss that question further."<sup>1</sup> The concluding sentence of the Governor's statement was probably a good indication of his true sentiments.

That harmony was not quite "supreme" throughout Iowa after the 1904 state convention, was indicated by a letter to Senator Allison from H. W. Byers. The Harlan Republican said that the seventh plank in the platform was not liked by many voters and that some congressional seats in Iowa might be lost because of the statement. Byers declared that he hoped the national platform would be written with the purpose of at least holding Republican votes and certainly not to drive any away.<sup>2</sup>

Another sign of dissatisfaction with the Iowa platform came from Waterloo. The Messenger reported that Republicans from Waterloo were going to organize a tariff reform league because of their disappointment with the state platform. The paper said that most Republicans in Waterloo were fairly unanimous in their stand for tariff revision as evidenced by their petition of 1901 to Congressman Henderson to use his influence for revision of schedules. Henderson's reply had come in the form of censure, arousing much opposition to

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<sup>1</sup>Hawk-Eye, May 24, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Byers to Allison, May 23, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351. See Appendix B for the Iowa Platform and the seventh plank.



Henderson, and according to the Messenger, "ultimately caused his retirement."<sup>1</sup> Such opposition may have had some effect regarding Henderson's withdrawal, but many other forces were also in operation at the time. The Waterloo opposition could not be regarded as necessarily the most important factor in the situation.<sup>2</sup> No reasons were found in the study for the interest in tariff reform in Waterloo over other Iowa cities.

For the "Standpat" element, however, the Iowa political picture was reason for elation. J. W. Blythe wrote to Senator Allison that the national convention could be anticipated as presenting no problems. He stated:

I think we are very much to be congratulated on the whole at the outcome of the convention. The temper of the convention was such that if our radical friends had insisted on extreme measures, I fear we might have had some unpleasantness. As it is, I cannot think that we have made any serious mistake or have gone so far that we can be embarrassed by anything that the national convention is likely to do.<sup>3</sup>

The St. Paul Dispatch editorialized upon the Iowa convention and resulting platform, in terms far from complimentary. The paper declared: "It seemed to us incredible that a body of republicans would so completely reverse opinions repeatedly expressed in con-

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<sup>1</sup>Fort Dodge Messenger, May 24, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 33 for the situation surrounding Henderson's resignation from the congressional contest.

<sup>3</sup>Blythe to Allison, May 20, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351.

vention as did this latest convention."<sup>1</sup> The St. Paul paper then proceeded to give its reasons for the defeat of the liberal view:

The motive that inspired this action was exactly the same that actuated the stalwarts in Wisconsin. It was a hot desire to "down" Cummins in Iowa as it was to "down" La Follette in the other state. Both men had overthrown machines that had ruled in their states for years. Each stood for ideas in advocacy of which they had won. Hostility attached to both and their cause.<sup>2</sup>

In the final portion of the article, however, hope for Cummins was expressed in the statement: "We predict that events will show that they have strengthened the hands of Gov. Cummins and the 'Iowa Idea.'"<sup>3</sup>

The turnabout in Iowa politics in 1904 might have appeared as a significant coup for the conservatives. Certainly they deserved some credit for the reversal by managing events at the district conventions when the liberals seemed to wilt in the face of conservative opposition. However, this was not the entire reason. A reaction had set in to the Governor's views, especially after the strong reciprocity bid in the 1904 inaugural speech. The Beacon suggested that the liberals were moving too fast for the people, since Iowans had been steeped in protection for years, being a Republican state. The enemies of Cummins, using their newspapers, pictured the

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<sup>1</sup>C. N. Goddard to Allison, June 4, 1904, enclosing editorial from the St. Paul Dispatch entitled "The Iowa Rebound," n.d., Allison Papers, Vol. 352.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Governor as an enemy of protection and a conspirator against the people.<sup>1</sup> Several instances of Cummins complaining about newspaper misrepresentation were found, but they were especially numerous in February, March, and April, 1904. The Messenger also spoke of the reaction against the Governor's ideas in 1904.<sup>2</sup> Again, Cummins' health was a factor. After being forced to leave his office in the early months of 1904, he finally went on a trip in an effort to restore his health. The extent of the influence of his health on the deterioration of the liberal control might be questioned, but that it did have some effect could be reasonably assumed. Thus, following the 1904 Iowa Republican Convention, the "Standpatters" were in control of the party, at least for the time being. However, Cummins was a delegate-at-large to the Republican National Convention, and in that role, would again make an effort in behalf of his views.

### III. THE 1904 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 1904 Republican National Convention was held in Chicago. Iowa sent twenty-six delegates, of whom four were the delegates-at-large, Senators Allison and Dolliver, Governor Cummins and the influential J. W. Blythe. Obviously the Iowa Governor was the only

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial in the Spirit Lake Beacon, May 6, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Editorial in the Fort Dodge Messenger, May 27, 1904.

one of these four representing the more liberal view of tariff revision, although Senator Dolliver leaned slightly in that direction. As mentioned previously,<sup>1</sup> only six of the twenty-six delegates from Iowa were liberals. Therefore, this minority could hardly be expected to exercise much influence and the conservatives were little disposed towards permitting the minority view to be expounded. Blythe wrote to Senator Allison prior to the convention that he had heard rumors that the Governor was going to try for recognition on "the Committee on Resolutions or on some other important committee."<sup>2</sup> Blythe observed: "I don't believe there is anything in it, but it might be well enough for us to take the thing by the forelock and ask our friends on the delegation not to commit themselves in any way until we can talk things over."<sup>3</sup>

Cummins did indeed, plan to take action at the national convention as shown by the events that transpired. The Iowa Governor proposed specific resolutions to be endorsed by the Iowa delegation that were very strong, and indicated Cummins was still continuing to press his views, despite the conservative strength. The following statements were among the points for which he sought endorsement by

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<sup>1</sup>See p. 82.

<sup>2</sup>Blythe to Allison, May 27, 1904, Allison Papers, Vol. 351.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

the Iowa delegation:

2. An unmistakeable recognition of the fact that the tariff schedules must be adjusted at reasonable intervals to meet changing conditions of production, and that any such readjustment should be made by the friends of protection.
3. That at the next session of the present Congress the subject should be taken up and such changes should be made as are required to preserve for our producers and secure for our consumers adequate protection — no more, no less.
4. A plain and forcible declaration for reciprocity to be established either by treaty or action of Congress, as circumstances may demand, whenever the policy can be employed to increase production at home and promote the general welfare, whether in competitive or non-competitive things.<sup>1</sup>

These resolutions demonstrated that the position of the Iowa Governor was not one of retreat or retrenchment. The Hawk-Eye stated that Cummins presented the Iowa delegates the "Iowa Idea" in "entirely new dress."<sup>2</sup> The result of Cummins' proposal was the tabling of the motion by a vote of twenty-three to three; and "to emphasize the defeat of Governor Cummins, J. W. Blythe was chosen as the Iowa member of the committee on resolutions."<sup>3</sup> Senator Dolliver, although reported as favoring Cummins' ideas in principle, spoke against them.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Albert, The Pretender, pamphlet from the Democratic State Committee, 1906, Hull Papers, File 9.

<sup>2</sup>Burlington Hawk-Eye, June 21, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Cedar Rapids Republican, June 21, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Ross, op. cit., p. 189.

The Iowa Senator declared the time had come for Iowa Republicans, and the delegates to the national convention to stop quibbling over differences. Dolliver said that the "proper thing to do is to cast aside questions upon which differences of opinion exist and to get together on the great mass of issues upon which there is strong agreement and to present the strongest front to the opposition."<sup>1</sup> The Republican reported that Governor Cummins had made the "futile and humiliating attempt in the Chicago convention" to try to "vindicate himself once more."<sup>2</sup>

A possible motive behind Cummins' actions at the Republican national convention might have been a letter he received from John A. Kasson in June, 1904. The former diplomatic officer asserted that he hoped Cummins' influence might "be felt on the question of the Platform at Chicago."<sup>3</sup> Kasson advised that there was a group of politicians who wanted the party to go on record with a vote of distrust of the Republican party, or a vote of want of confidence in the party by putting in the resolutions a declaration opposing all revision of the tariff. He declared: "It will damage our party widely if this is done."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Register and Leader, June 21, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Cedar Rapids Republican, June 22, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Kasson to Cummins, June 16, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 14, File 54.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Following the defeat of Cummins' maneuvers within the Iowa delegation, attention turned to the sub-committee preparing the Republican National Platform of 1904. The members were: Lodge of Massachusetts, Galling of New Hampshire, Lauterbach of New York, Dalzell of Pennsylvania, Foraker of Ohio, Hopkins of Illinois, Clark of Wyoming, Nelson of Minnesota, Hansbrough of North Dakota, Heyburn of Idaho, Blythe of Iowa, Beveridge of Indiana and Short of California. Lodge was the chairman of this group. Only Nelson and Hansbrough were regarded as being sympathetic to revision along the lines of Governor Cummins' ideas.<sup>1</sup>

Blythe was reported as opposing the statement of endorsement given to reciprocity but was out-voted.<sup>2</sup> The Messenger commented about Blythe's actions at the convention by saying Iowa had been criticized for recent tariff agitation on the grounds of being out of line with Republicans elsewhere in the country and that Blythe "and his supporters . . . proposed to restore Iowa to good standing within the party and make its opinions so much like all the rest . . . ."<sup>3</sup> The paper concluded by asserting that one of Blythe's first acts on the committee on resolutions had been to "appear as one of a minority in the party council, fighting with Mr. Dalzell of

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<sup>1</sup>Hawk-Eye, June 22, 1904, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Editorial in the Fort Dodge Messenger, June 28, 1904.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Pittsburgh, for the most extreme and uncompromising expression of the protective policy."<sup>1</sup> No evidence was found that Blythe was working in the interests of the Burlington Railroad. Apparently, his anti-tariff and anti-reciprocity maneuvers were motivated by fear of Cummins' threat to the Republican Establishment in Iowa rather than any corporate influence on Blythe.

The platform, as finally adopted by the Republicans in 1904 declared that protection was "a cardinal policy of the Republican party" and that "rates of duty should be readjusted only when conditions have so changed that the public interest demands their alteration."<sup>2</sup> On the subject of reciprocity the statement said the policy should be followed "whenever reciprocal arrangements can be effected consistent with the principles of protection and without injury to American agriculture, American labor, or any American industry."<sup>3</sup>

Senator Dolliver's reaction was neither one of elation nor chagrin, but rather a calm declaration in the mood of his advice to the Iowa delegation when reacting to Cummins' insistence upon a more definite tariff plank. The Iowa Senator declared that he did not "see in the national platform any vindication of anybody except those

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ross, op. cit., p. 70, citing McDowell, Platforms, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. See Appendix C for portions of the 1904 Republican Platform.



who quietly urged our people at Des Moines to make a broad and generous statement of party faith."<sup>1</sup>

Governor Cummins appeared pleased with the platform, at least in his letters and public statements. He told a reporter that the "declaration of Republican principles upon which we are now to make a national campaign as compared with the recent Iowa platform is a distinct victory for the Iowa idea."<sup>2</sup> The Iowa Governor declared that he could make such an assertion because the platform distinctly recognized that tariff schedules must be revised when conditions required a change, but the Iowa platform refused to recognize any such possibility. Furthermore, stated Cummins, the national platform "does not confine reciprocity to non-competitive products as specifically declared in the Iowa platform."<sup>3</sup>

In writing to a supporter in Wisconsin, Cummins declared that the work of the national convention left the "door open" to increase public sentiment for tariff revision and that he had done "everything in my power to induce a straightforward, positive, statement . . . ."<sup>4</sup> Concluding, the Governor declared: "While the platform settles

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<sup>1</sup> Dolliver to Perkins, June 27, 1904, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Interview given to a reporter named Williams following the Republican National Convention, n.n., n.d., Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. I.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Cummins to H. Strong, June 25, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 10.

nothing so far as the general struggle is concerned it is a complete victory when compared with the platform recently adopted in my own state."<sup>1</sup>

Many Cummins' admirers thought that the national platform vindicated his views. An Oskaloosa man wrote that he was commending Cummins because "the Republican National Platform substantially adopts the 'Iowa Idea' and sustains Governor Cummins."<sup>2</sup> Another message, from Michigan, stated that the writer wished to extend congratulations to the Iowa Governor for "compelling the bosses to admit that such a thing as a tariff revision might be necessary. While they claim the 'Iowa Idea' was downed, I know the 'Iowa Idea' made itself felt and to you belongs the credit."<sup>3</sup> G. C. Hutchin, Secretary of the Iowa State Manufacturing Association wrote to Governor Cummins: "Permit me to extend congratulations for the splendid recognition given you and the 'Iowa Idea' at the hands of the Resolutions Committee at the National Convention."<sup>4</sup> The Grinnell Gazette declared that the national platform was "a complete victory for the friends of revision and reciprocity and a Cummins' victory."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>J. B. Bolton to Cummins, June 22, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 14, File 54.

<sup>3</sup>George Fenton to Cummins, June 23, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 14, File 54.

<sup>4</sup>G. C. Hutchin to Cummins, June 23, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 14, File 54.

<sup>5</sup>Grinnell Gazette, July 7, 1904, Cummins Papers, Scrapbooks, Vol. II.

Historians have varied in their interpretations of the Republican platform of 1904. One holds that the platform modified the high tariff position of previous years as a gesture of compromise after Cummins' protests of a year earlier. He stated that the tariff reformers were justified in believing that they had gained something in the 1904 declaration, since it urged that rates of duty be readjusted when conditions so changed that the public demanded their change.<sup>1</sup> This view would support Cummins' contention that the 1904 Republican platform was a victory for his position on tariff revision and reciprocity.

The 1904 Republican platform reflected general compatibility with the views of President Roosevelt. In his second annual message to Congress in 1902, he declared he was not in favor of adjusting the tariff to reach the evils of trusts, but rather wanted proper regulation of business to give domestic competition a fair chance. The President said that the first consideration was to put American business interests at least on a full equality with foreign interests and to allow "a sufficient rate of duty to more than cover the difference between labor costs here and abroad . . . ."<sup>2</sup> Roosevelt

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<sup>1</sup>Malcolm Moos, The Republicans: A History of Their Party (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 247.

<sup>2</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, State Papers as Governor and President (Vol. XV of The Works of Theodore Roosevelt, ed. Hermann Hagedorn. 20 vols., National edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), pp. 144-45.

declared that one method of readjustment was through reciprocity which would open wider fields to American producers and provide for lowering of the duties when no longer needed. The President asserted such lowering of the rates might be pursued "when the minimum damage done may be disregarded for the sake of the maximum good accomplished."<sup>1</sup> Finally, he said if reciprocity could not be used to adjust the rates, then duties might be directly lowered after complete consideration by practical experts who would examine the problem from the business view and for the commercial well being of the people.<sup>2</sup> Notice should be taken of the similarity of Roosevelt's statements and the views of Governor Cummins.

In 1904, when responding to the committee appointed to notify him of his nomination for the Presidency, Roosevelt's language was more general as he declared changes in the tariff should be made whenever the need arose but only by those devoted to the protective principle.<sup>3</sup> He also suggested that the United States should pursue reciprocal arrangements as outlined by McKinley whenever such agreements could be made without harm to American industry or American labor.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. See Appendix D for a portion of Roosevelt's remarks.

<sup>3</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, Presidential Addresses and State Papers of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1920), III, pp. 42-43.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

These statements of the President of 1902 and 1904 reveal considerable agreement with assertions of Governor Cummins. As previously stated, Cummins did not advocate using the tariff to get at the evils of the trusts nor general tariff revision, even though his enemies constantly harped on the opposite theme.<sup>1</sup> He urged reciprocity for the United States even if some harm was done to American business because, the Iowa Governor said, more advantages would accrue to this country.<sup>2</sup> Finally, Governor Cummins said that the United States should use reciprocity to help "our own people" and that import duties should measure the difference between the costs of production in this country and in foreign countries.<sup>3</sup> Comparison of Roosevelt's statements, Cummins' statements and the 1904 Republican platform indicate many areas of agreement, and probably more than the conservatives would want to admit. However, such points of agreement were so general in nature that an interpreter for either side could find in each, arguments in support of his point of view.

Blum has argued that for the 1904 campaign, Roosevelt needed the help of local organizations which had been built up by Republican congressmen. Since most of these congressmen were devoted to protec-

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>See pp. 20-21.

tion along "standpat" lines, the President subscribed to their policy on the protective tariff. He has suggested that even Roosevelt's support of Cuban reciprocity was to be considered "an aberrant episode."<sup>1</sup> This was an example of Roosevelt doing what he considered to be the expedient thing; and one writer has argued that Roosevelt's commitment to tariff reform, if it existed at all, was little more than a matter of expediency. He thinks that whenever Roosevelt could convince himself that morality was not involved in a question the expedient thing was the right thing, "and in the general tariff issue, by far the most expedient thing was to do nothing."<sup>2</sup>

An indication of what might be done for tariff revision following the national campaign and election of 1904, was contained in a letter from Senator Allison to George Perkins. The influential Senator said he felt the tariff question would be settled wisely but that action should be undertaken as soon as possible after March 4, 1905 to relieve discontent that might follow before the congressional elections of 1906. Allison said the summer of 1905 was the time for the friends of protection to examine the subject. He declared reasons should be given for any changes which might be made. The Senator

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Blum, The Republican Roosevelt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> Acree, op. cit., p. 43, citing George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt (in The New American Nation Series, eds. Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 127; and Moos, op. cit., p. 251, quoting Roosevelt as saying: "I am having anything but a harmonious time about the tariff . . . which I regard as a matter of expediency."

felt such action would consolidate the party in support of whatever was done.<sup>1</sup> Thus, at least correspondence by one prominent Republican indicated some inclination towards revision of the tariff so long sought by the liberals. Whether such changes would meet the liberal requirements and be quickly effected would only be demonstrated by the passage of time.

#### IV. GROUPS SUPPORTING CUMMINS

Despite the triumph of the conservatives in 1904, the "Iowa Idea" was far from dead. There was widespread popular support for tariff reform throughout the state, both individual and corporate. Typical of the letters received in the Iowa capital were those which spoke as follows:

Stand to your guns — If the Republicans do not revise the tariff the Democrats will — You are right. Your doctrine will pass the party, and the country — Republican revision means continued prosperity, the gradual minimizing of the trust influences . . . .<sup>2</sup>

Permit me to congratulate you on the position you occupy regarding tariff revision . . . . The Iowa platform rings true as recognized throughout the land — albeit I do not have full faith in anything being done until the people urge more vigorously.<sup>3</sup>

The Governor was often asked to speak to meetings of the groups

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<sup>1</sup>Allison to Perkins, November 27, 1904, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>R. E. Jenkins to Cummins, September 18, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 6, File 23.

<sup>3</sup>James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, to Cummins, December, n.d., 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 27.

giving him their support. Whenever possible, Cummins tried to comply with these requests. Obviously, speaking engagements helped to arouse and sustain public interest in the subjects of tariff revision and reciprocity. This situation was especially true because of the newspaper publicity customarily attendant to the Governor's speeches given outside of Iowa.

One of the Iowa organizations supporting Governor Cummins was the Tri-City Reciprocity League. This group was composed of manufacturers from Davenport, Iowa, and Rock Island and Moline, Illinois. The members included: the Bettendorf Metal Wheel Company, Deere and Company, the Moline Elevator Company, the Moline Plow Company, the Moline Wagon Company, the Rock Island Iron Works, the Sylvan Steel Works, and the Wilson-Moline Buggy Company. The group advertised their total number of employees at 6,600, aggregate capital and surplus at 17 million dollars, and the value of their products annually at over 18 million dollars.<sup>1</sup> The association wrote to Congressman Henderson in late 1902, urging him to persuade Senator Allison to use his influence for liberal reciprocity treaties. The League contended that foreign nations were retaliating commercially because of senatorial inactivity on the reciprocity treaties negotiated under the

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<sup>1</sup>From the letterhead, Tri-City Reciprocity League to Cummins, February 10, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 49.



McKinley administration and this action was hurting the manufacturers.<sup>1</sup> The harm, the League stated, was due to the foreign retaliation causing a reduction in the consumption of American farm products.<sup>2</sup> Henderson forwarded the letter to Senator Allison for the Senator's consideration.<sup>3</sup>

The Corresponding Secretary of the League, Nathaniel French,<sup>4</sup> wrote to the Iowa Governor and all the members of the Iowa delegation in Congress in early 1904. French urged expansion of reciprocity. He said that manufacturers gained when the farmer could sell abroad, since this increased his ability to buy farm machinery, and the manufacturers also profited from expansion of export trade in manufactured goods. French argued that Canadian reciprocity would be beneficial to both nations. He warned that if more friendly trade relations were not forthcoming, a retaliatory policy would be used by the Canadians, and the United States' exports would fall. French defended entrance of Canadian wheat into the American market as not harmful to the price of wheat, as the price was fixed abroad where wheat from all nations met in competition. He said that the League would not support reciprocity in Canadian wheat if the situation were

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<sup>1</sup>Henderson to Allison, December 9, 1902, enclosing letter from the Tri-City Reciprocity League, Allison Papers, Vol. 346.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>French was the Vice-President of the Bettendorf Metal Wheel Company.

otherwise, since the League members depended upon the farmers' prosperity. He concluded by saying that English goods received preferential rates in Canada and that this preference would increase in the near future if the United States did not seek closer reciprocal trade arrangements with her northern neighbor.<sup>1</sup>

An interesting aspect of the Tri-City Reciprocity League was that it was a branch of the National Reciprocity League of Chicago. John A. Kasson, the former Iowan and chief negotiator of the Kasson Treaties, was a member of the Board of Directors of this organization. As mentioned previously, Kasson may have been of some influence in shaping Cummins' views regarding the tariff and reciprocity. The Iowa Governor was asked to speak to the national convention of the League in a letter written by the Secretary, who stated that the organization felt Cummins represented the principles advocated by the League through his association with the "Iowa Idea."<sup>2</sup>

Another Iowa firm supporting the Governor was the John Morrell and Company meat packing organization of Ottumwa. Thomas D. Foster, an officer of the firm, praised Cummins for his stand on the tariff: "I am very much pleased with your consistent stand in favor of a modified tariff and adjustment of trusts as far as possible through

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<sup>1</sup>Tri-City Reciprocity League to Cummins, February 10, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 49.

<sup>2</sup>Secretary of The National Reciprocity League to Cummins, November 20, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 26.

the tariff, it is the only vital issue before the country today."<sup>1</sup> Foster declared that England was preparing to enact tariff laws harmful to the United States and he felt this country should "move by easy stages" to show England "that we are friendly and willing to exchange products with her on terms that are becoming easier . . . ."<sup>2</sup> Foster said such a move would be in the interests of the United States and of Iowa because of increased trade, both in manufactured goods, and agricultural products, that would occur.<sup>3</sup> Although the firm was largely an American operation in 1902, it still maintained offices in Liverpool. T. D. Foster was the son of William Foster, a partner of the original founder of the firm, John Morrell.<sup>4</sup>

Two Iowa firms however, were opposed to the removal of duties from specific articles. The Roddewig-Schmidt Candy Company of Davenport wrote to Senator Allison, saying that the removal of duties from sugar beets would eliminate the sugar beet industry in the United States.<sup>5</sup> The Crescent Macaroni Company of Davenport opposed the

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas D. Foster to Cummins, August 1, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 6, File 21.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>The Fruit of 100 Years (Ottumwa: John Morrell and Company, 1927), pp. 3-5.

<sup>5</sup>Roddewig-Schmidt Candy Company to Allison, December 31, 1902, Allison Papers, Vol. 348.

removal of duties on macaroni, and in fact, desired an increase.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the business community, as well as the political community, experienced different views on the tariff reform question. The business attitude toward tariff reform generally depended upon how such reform would affect the firms' economic interests.

Many out-of-state groups wrote to Cummins indicating their support of his ideas. The Michigan Manufacturers Association asked Cummins for a statement of his views, pointing out that: "Michigan manufacturers want the Canada markets and most of us favor reciprocity in a general way; but there is a diversity of views as to the details of mutual concession . . . ."<sup>2</sup> The Iowa Governor was in contact with the Minnesota Governor as the two exchanged ideas concerning a liberal tariff policy. The Massachusetts Reform Club of Boston wrote to Governor Cummins early in 1902, asking him to address the January meeting of the group. The Secretary of the Club told Cummins that the organization would like to hear an address on the tariff by the chief exponent of the "Iowa Idea."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Crescent Macaroni Company to Allison, February 19, 1902, Allison Papers, Vol. 348.

<sup>2</sup>George Bardern, President of The Michigan Manufacturers Association to Cummins, February 10, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 13, File 49.

<sup>4</sup>J. G. Palfrey, Secretary of The Massachusetts Reform Club of Boston to Cummins, January 9, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 3, File 10.

A very strong link existed between E. N. Foss of Boston and Governor Cummins as both sought to extend ideas of tariff revision and reciprocity throughout their section of the nation. Foss was a brother of Congressman Foss of Chicago and had also been a Republican candidate for nomination to public office on a liberal trade policy.<sup>1</sup> Foss was a leader in the movement for Canadian reciprocity, and although a life-long Republican, later changed parties and was elected Governor of Massachusetts in 1910 on the Democratic ticket.<sup>2</sup> Foss and Cummins engaged in considerable correspondence, exchanging views and working on strategy. Foss was, at the time of this correspondence, Manager and Treasurer for the B. F. Sturtevant Blower Company of Boston. The firm maintained offices in London, indicating more than a passing interest in world trade. Foss was also on the National Committee of the American Reciprocal Tariff League with offices in Chicago.<sup>3</sup> He wrote to Cummins in 1903, "our reciprocity work is progressing very favorably here."<sup>4</sup> A month later Foss asserted "another very encouraging symptom" was the use of the

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<sup>1</sup>Shaw to Perkins, September 6, 1902, Perkins Papers.

<sup>2</sup>Commonwealth History of Massachusetts (Vol. V, ed. A. B. Hart. 5 vols., New York: The States History Co., 1930), pp. 180-81.

<sup>3</sup>American Reciprocal Tariff League to Cummins, October 24, 1905, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 19.

<sup>4</sup>Foss to Cummins, March 14, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 8, File 32.

editorial column of an influential local publication which had been offered to Foss to publicize reciprocity.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly before the Iowa Republican convention of 1903, the Massachusetts colleague of Cummins wrote to him about reports of the "death" of the "Iowa Idea." Foss declared he had noticed the attempts of the press to convince the public that the "Iowa Idea" was dead, but that he was certain of its vitality and of Cummins' purpose to impress the issue upon the people.<sup>2</sup> Following the convention, Foss told Cummins, "the next step, I presume, is to get these ideas into the national platform."<sup>3</sup>

The Governor spoke of the national platform to Foss in October, 1903, saying the East and West would have to work together for the fight at the national convention. "We must be able to make a sufficient showing there to coerce our opponents into a platform that will give us a good title for the future," declared Cummins.<sup>4</sup>

Cummins wrote to Foss that a Canadian reciprocity treaty would never be achieved until a campaign had been waged "establishing the

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<sup>1</sup>Foss to Cummins, April 11, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

<sup>2</sup>Foss to Cummins, June 19, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 10, File 37.

<sup>3</sup>Foss to Cummins, July 11, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 10, File 38.

<sup>4</sup>Cummins to Foss, October 5, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letter-books, Vol. 7.

essential lines upon which these treaties must be negotiated."<sup>1</sup> The Iowa Governor said he felt that the two main obstacles to any progress were: first, the tendency not to disturb the tariff directly or indirectly for fear of upsetting business stability and confidence, and second, the belief that none of the American market, no matter how small, should be traded for foreign markets, no matter how large.<sup>2</sup>

In early 1904, Foss wrote that he was not pleased with the fact that President Roosevelt had deferred so much to party leaders on reciprocity but that Foss understood the President's policy to be one of advising "his reciprocity friends to convert our opponents in the Senate."<sup>3</sup>

Foss, as well as Cummins, encountered problems in trying to propagate the liberal tariff views. He sent Cummins a copy of a letter of resolutions by the Home Market Club of Boston against competitive reciprocity.<sup>4</sup> The Boston Post reported that Foss tried to have a plank for Canadian reciprocity put into the Massachusetts Republican platform for 1904, but was defeated.<sup>5</sup> Foss urged that a

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Foss, November 9, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Foss to Cummins, January 29, 1904, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 12, File 48.

<sup>4</sup>Foss to Cummins, April 3, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33. See Appendix E for these resolutions.

<sup>5</sup>Boston Post, April 16, 1904, p. 1.

need for tariff revision existed, but along "sane and systematic lines" to prevent any fear of disturbance to business. The Massachusetts liberal said that if the public only understood the merits of reciprocity, they would "take up with it."<sup>1</sup>

Another prominent Republican interested in cooperation between the East and West in working for a tariff statement was Postmaster-General Payne. He reminded Cummins that the "great battlefield of 1904 will be the states of New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, where the people are very sensitive regarding the tariff."<sup>2</sup> Payne suggested that the "sensitivity" of the East "should be given due weight in considering the wisdom of any action on the tariff question."<sup>3</sup>

The Iowa Governor's views sometimes aroused the hostility of the out-of-state business community. Emory English, a newspaperman and friend of the Governor's, sent him a letter that had been sent to English by a Philadelphia firm. The letter was decidedly anti-Cummins and the Governor considered it to be such a distortion of his views that he wrote to the company in rebuttal. The message had declared that Cummins favored "cheap foreign underpaid labor from Europe, rather

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<sup>1</sup>Foss to Cummins, December 30, 1902, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 7, File 28.

<sup>2</sup>Postmaster-General Payne to Cummins, March 7, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 8, File 32.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



than protection to the American producer."<sup>1</sup> The message declared: "Governor Cummins does not realize that to open the tariff question . . . would rip open the whole subject, with its attendant paralysis of business; . . . ."<sup>2</sup> In his rebuttal, Governor Cummins pointedly retorted: "I have never written nor spoken anything from which my most malignant enemy could deduce the conclusion that you have expressed. I have been fighting for protection . . . for more than thirty years, and am fighting for it now."<sup>3</sup>

Another firm however, seemed to be on the side of the Governor. A post-card was sent to Cummins by a friend from Garner. The card was printed by Forman, Ford and Company of Minneapolis and gave a brief paragraph against the high tariff protection given to the "trust" producing plate glass in America.<sup>4</sup>

Much of the business support for Cummins seemed to come from smaller enterprises. Perhaps these firms felt that their commercial prospects might be enhanced if tariff laws were enacted aimed at

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<sup>1</sup>Emory English to Cummins enclosing a letter from Justice, Bateman and Company, April 9, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33. Justice, Bateman and Company were wool merchants.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Cummins to Justice, Bateman and Company, April 13, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 5.

<sup>4</sup>W. C. Amsden to Cummins enclosing card from Forman, Ford and Company, February 18, 1903, Cummins Papers, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 8, File 31.

the removal of protection from the products of the larger companies. Such removal might have placed the smaller firms in a more competitive position. However, these smaller businesses would also have to compete with the foreign products, but they might have reckoned the foreign competition to be of less importance than the giant domestic producers' ability to compete. No information was found as to what extent these firms were engaged in foreign trade. Perhaps these smaller companies sought to gain by sharing in expanded foreign trade and markets. Particularly, the Iowa firms engaged in meat-packing and the manufacture of farm machines evidenced a desire to share in the expansion of foreign markets. As already stated, the Tri-City Reciprocity League wanted reciprocity for indirect benefits. That is, if farmers sold more of their goods because of expanded reciprocity, the League, whose members were large producers of goods used by farmers, would benefit too, because of the improvement of the farmers' prosperity.

The Republican wrote in June, 1902, that firms urging reciprocity were actually free-traders. The editorial declared that New England manufacturers of boots and shoes, some branches of the steel industry, harvester trust, and Minneapolis mills wanted Canadian markets opened to their products by getting the United States to lower duties; not on what these firms produced, but on other products, especially farm products. In return, these manufacturers expected the Canadian government to lower the duties on the goods made by these American companies. The article concluded by saying that such a

situation would "deprive the American farmer of the protection given him in the Dingley law, . . . ." <sup>1</sup>

Thus the debate continued through 1904 and into 1905. In 1904 the conservatives were celebrating a requiem for the "Iowa Idea" and the liberals said they had gained a victory in the Republican national platform of 1904. Which of these positions were correct would have to await the passage of time for resolution. Even then, proponents of each view would probably argue to the contrary, if time seemed to have proven them wrong.

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<sup>1</sup>Editorial in the Cedar Rapids Republican, June 11, 1904.

## CHAPTER V

### AN APPRAISAL

Observed from the span of six and one-half decades, the "Iowa Idea" appears as a "tempest in a teapot." The arguments of 1902 to 1904 among conservative and liberal Republicans over a tariff and reciprocity policy for the United States were bitter. Increasing factionalism was a consequence for Iowa Republicans. Yet, with all of the sound and fury, the tariff was not affected. Tariff changes did occur later, but in the years treated in this paper, the "Iowa Idea" did not directly alter the tariff or reciprocity policy of the United States. However, to the Republicans of early Twentieth Century Iowa, the controversy and its implications were very real. From much of the foregoing material the obvious fact emerges that the "idea" did possess divergent definitions, depending upon the interpreter. Governor Cummins should have been considered as the best qualified person to define the concept and from his letters and speeches, a constant was found.

The "Iowa Idea" did not stand for destruction of the protective tariff system. Repeatedly Governor Cummins asserted this fact plus his devotion to the protective principle. In giving his views to A. M. Case of Rockford, Iowa, Cummins declared that he was a "thorough-going protectionist" but believed in tariff changes from

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time to time to meet new conditions.<sup>1</sup> To the Economics Club of Boston he stated:

. . . I am not speaking for free trade, but for a more faithful, more equitable, more righteous application of the doctrine of protection.

. . . It seems to me that we have gone mad in our zeal for the seller, and have abandoned the buyer to the tender mercy of monopoly, combination and greed.<sup>2</sup>

The last statement was made after the 1904 Republican National Convention and was not as strong as some of the Governor's earlier declarations. To the Hamilton Club of Chicago he had stated that duties on imported articles should be so levied as to control American markets, supply domestic needs, and provide work for American labor. To this statement, the Iowa Governor added:

. . . It may be a high tariff or a low tariff or no tariff at all, and we shall change and modify every existing statute as often and as radically as the mutations of time and circumstance may require.<sup>3</sup>

This assertion was clearly more outspoken than those made later, but does not indicate negation of protection. Later declarations of the Governor would prove that he was still in the Republican fold and not espousing Democratic doctrines as was so frequently charged by Cummins' detractors.

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to A. M. Case, March 17, 1904, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Speech to the Economics Club of Boston, November 9, 1905, Cummins Papers, Telegrams and Speeches, Box 29, File 114.

<sup>3</sup>Speech to the Hamilton Club of Chicago, n.d., Cummins Papers, Speeches, Box 30, File 118.

The Iowa Governor envisioned a flexible tariff that would provide domestic protection where necessary and remove that protection when not needed. The concept, if one accepted Cummins' later assertions, was not to use the tariff to destroy the trusts or cure the evils of the trusts, but to restore effective competition in areas where competition no longer existed. The idea of preserving competition was found repeatedly in the Governor's statements, and he apparently felt its preservation or restoration would automatically ameliorate conditions whereby consumers were forced to pay higher prices because of a lack of competition. However, the "Iowa Idea" originally did propose using the tariff to control the trusts. The 1901 and 1902 platforms declared Iowa Republicans favored "any modifications of the tariff schedules that may be required to prevent their affording a shelter to monopoly."<sup>1</sup> This was the position vigorously opposed by the conservatives and in the 1903 platform, the trusts were separated from the tariff. This suggested an evolution of the concept and of Cummins' thinking, since the Governor declared he wished to separate the tariff and the trusts.<sup>2</sup> As the evolution progressed, the liberals shifted to the idea of regulation of the trusts to control whatever evil tendencies these aggregations might possess.

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<sup>1</sup>See pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup>See p. 44.

The reciprocity that Cummins sought was to enlarge American markets where possible. Such a course was to be followed even if some damage might be done to a small segment of American business. The logic behind such thinking was that the advantages of reciprocity would outweigh its disadvantages. Writing to Albert Shaw of The Review of Reviews, Cummins declared:

I believe, also, that greater scope should be given to the reciprocal idea, the fundamental object being to increase the amount of work to be done in our country, even if an occasional unimportant protected industry may go down or be injured by the treaty.

I believe that I am a more rigid protectionist than many who challenge my views, and I cannot but believe that the friends of protection, who are now standing against any sort of revision or change, are its worst enemies.<sup>1</sup>

The "Iowa Idea" could be defined as advocating: (1) flexible tariffs to provide protection where needed, and some type of control of competition without resorting to free trade or a tariff for revenue only, and (2) reciprocity aimed at enlarging American markets abroad with a minimum of domestic damage.

Admittedly such a definition, being of a general nature, would allow for varying interpretations. The questions of determining where protection was necessary; when to control competition and how; and the enlargement of American markets with a minimum of domestic harm, did plague the Republicans of Iowa and the nation. Obviously some of

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<sup>1</sup> Cummins to Albert Shaw, August 6, 1902, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 2.

the enemies of Governor Cummins would leap at the whole idea in anger, since "good" Republicans believed the doctrine of protection deserved unquestioned devotion. To suggest a minimum of damage done to an American business through reciprocity was anathema to orthodox Republicans. "Good" Republicans did not talk about such subjects publicly, and even in private were inclined to question the status quo circumspectly. Secretary Shaw and Congressman Lacey appeared obsessed with the phobia of a Republican taking up Democratic ideas, yet the Iowa Governor never suggested a tariff for revenue only, as the Democrats had done. The fear of impending economic catastrophe also hung like a "sword of Damocles" over faithful Republicans at the hint of tariff revision. This fear was constantly evident in the letters of Shaw and Lacey. Finally, those who questioned Cummins' views, especially Senator Allison and J. W. Blythe, were fearful of factionalism cutting into Republican ranks with the obvious consequences to election possibilities for their party.

Some enemies declared that Governor Cummins was a radical bent upon screaming tariff reform for his benefit and to gain publicity in furthering his goal of becoming a United States Senator. Such a statement, however, is grossly inaccurate, for the Iowa Governor was far more than a political opportunist. Cummins' desire to become a Senator cannot be denied. One writer has stated that Cummins may have adjusted his tariff stand when expedient but "did not abandon



his basic belief on the matter."<sup>1</sup> He believes that some of Cummins' acts may have seemed self-seeking since the Governor was a practical man rather than an idealist, but that the Iowa liberal sought to achieve a balance between advancing his career and achieving improvements in government.<sup>2</sup>

Some of Cummins' opponents would attack his proposals as being evidence of economic naivete. Their argument was that his general remarks gave little evidence of expertise in the complex field of tariff revision, and that to make glib suggestions was easy in comparison to specific applications. Yet, one might question the expertise of the detractors, as some were no more expert than was the Governor. The office of governor of a state might be questioned as not providing a proper background for tariff reform ideas, but such an office would be no more strange in the field than that of being a railroad attorney as was J. W. Blythe, one of Cummins' most vocal critics.

The general nature of the "Iowa Idea" was one of its defects. Since the concept was not specific, many party leaders seemed to find its interpretation a basic responsibility. Cummins constantly faced erroneous conceptions of the "Iowa Idea," and tried to correct what he felt were misconstructions. The many newspapers, being politically

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<sup>1</sup> Acrea, op. cit., p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

allied as they were with the conservative or liberal elements, added to the confusion by giving their interpretations according to their particular suasion.

The personal animus of the conservatives towards Cummins and the "Iowa Idea" was recurrent, especially from Secretary of the Treasury Shaw and J. W. Blythe. The "Iowa Idea" provided the basis upon which to attack the Governor and his recreant statements; and attack seemed necessary, since Cummins was regarded as a threat to the entrenched power of Shaw, Blythe and others.

One might argue that the situation of having a general idea, subject to wide interpretation was politically advantageous, since an aspiring politician could be "all things to all people," hiding behind the vagueness of the concept he was expositing. The study revealed no occasion of the Governor contradicting himself on important positions. There were some instances of retrenchment and modification when opposition seemed to demand such, as was indicated in the 1903 Iowa platform, although the Governor asserted that there was no retreat involved. However, to modify was not to abandon, and throughout the study no evidence of reversal was found.

As to the effect of the "Iowa Idea" upon state and national affairs, the concept did demonstrate some influence. Obviously, the Iowa "political pot" was boiling through the years 1902 - 1904 because of the "idea." The concept was stated in the Republican state platforms of 1901 and 1902; reasserted, according to Governor

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Cummins in 1903; but if a true reassertion, was modified in expression; and ignored by Iowa Republicans in 1904. However, it was at least suggested in the Republican national platform of 1904 insofar as there was a guarded recognition of the need for tariff revision. Whether or not this "guarded recognition" might have been termed a victory for the "Iowa Idea" would be a moot question. To the extent that the idea of change was mentioned, the assertion was a victory, but not a very great one, for victories are measured by achievement, not assertions.

As time passed, however, tariff reform became a matter of increasing national agitation. In the presidential election of 1908, Taft went beyond the Republican platform of that year, and pledged downward revision of the tariff. The Republican platform had only promised revision, but had not specified what kind. The result of this agitation was the Payne-Aldrich measure which both Senators Dolliver and Cummins,<sup>1</sup> along with other insurgents in the Senate, fought. They considered the Payne-Aldrich measure a deception for, although it reduced rates, the bill provided for a change in the classification of goods thus negating most reductions. Undoubtedly this conservative-insurgent argument had some influence upon the split in the Republican party in 1912.

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<sup>1</sup> Allison died in August, 1908. Cummins defeated Lacey for the Republican nomination and was elected to the Senate by the Iowa General Assembly, November 24, 1908.

Real victory for the "Iowa Idea" might be found in the Underwood-Simmons bill of 1913. This measure provided for a significant lowering of average duties and put many products on the free list. The bill removed protection from trust produced articles which Cummins had sought so many years earlier.<sup>1</sup> The Underwood Tariff Act was "the first significant lowering of the tariff wall since 1861,"<sup>2</sup> and the "Progressives" of Iowa deserved some of the credit for its passage as they were among the first to agitate this issue.

In the book, Anti-intellectualism in American Life, Hofstadter has stated:

The values of business and intellect are seen as eternally and inevitably at odds: on the one side, there is the money-centered or power-centered man, who cares only about business and the dollar, about boosting and hollow optimism; on the other side, there are the men of critical intellect, who distrust American civilization and concern themselves with quality and moral values.<sup>3</sup>

Albert Baird Cummins probably could not be termed an intellectual, at least by Hofstadter's criteria, but this does not imply that he was not intelligent. In the milieu of the "Iowa Idea" he appeared as critical of some aspects of American business and concerned with certain moral values. Cummins did not distrust American civilization,

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<sup>1</sup>David A. Shannon, Twentieth Century America (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1963), p. 54.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Hofstadter, Anti-intellectualism in American Life (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), p. 234.

but felt the "Iowa Idea" might bring some improvement to the business segment of that civilization. The achievement of this improvement and the form that it assumed would be open to question, but the attempt towards that goal cannot be denied.

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Letters and papers of the people involved provided the principal portion of the documentary materials used in this study. The collections of Senator Allison and Governor Cummins were of particular help for the years 1901 - 1904. Inasmuch as the Governor was the major exponent of one segment of Iowa Republicanism during this turbulent period, his letters, speeches and collections of miscellaneous materials provided an insight into the political scene in Iowa from the "Progressive" outlook. Such personal papers provided information that is often missing from the usual biographical treatment of important people. Senator Allison's papers, coupled with those collections of the more emphatic "Standpat" proponents such as Congressmen Lacey and Hull, plus the newspapermen George Perkins and Lafayette Young provided the line of thought counter to that of Cummins.

Newspapers were used to give some idea of what information the public received, but were not relied upon very heavily because of their political bias. The line between fact and distortion, in many instances, depended upon the politics of the newspaper owner, editorial writer, or reporter.

The books used were mainly biographies and general studies of the Republican party. They were employed to provide background information and items necessary to the study, but were of less importance than the ideas obtained from the manuscript collections.

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## APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM A. B. CUMMINS TO F. J. SMALLEY<sup>1</sup>

.....

In 1902 we said, with regard to changes in the tariff, "We favor such changes in the tariff from time to time as becomes advisable through the progress of our industries and their changing relations to the commerce of the world."

We said this year that, "Tariff rates enacted to carry this policy into effect should be just, fair, and impartial equally opposed to foreign control and domestic monopoly, to sectional discrimination and individual favoritism, and must from time to time be changed to meet the varying conditions incident to the progress of our industries and their changing relations to our foreign and domestic commerce."

Tell me now frankly which is the stronger. Last year we simply said, "We favor such changes as become advisable through the progress of our industries." This year we say that tariff rates "MUST from time to time be changed to meet the varying conditions incident," etc.

Concerning the relation of the tariff to monopolies, we said last year, "We favor such amendment of the interstate commerce act as will more fully carry out its prohibition of discriminations in rate making and any modification of the tariff schedules that may be required to prevent their affording a shelter to monopoly."

This year we said, "Tariff rates enacted to carry this policy into effect should be just, fair, and impartial, equally opposed to foreign control and domestic monopoly."

Will you tell me what more emphatic declaration could be made than the one that, "Tariff rates should be opposed to domestic monopoly?" What is the difference between saying that they must be opposed to monopoly, and saying that we do not want them to shelter monopoly?

Last year we said on reciprocity, "We endorse the policy of reciprocity as the natural complement of protection, and urge its development as necessary to the realization of our highest commercial possibilities."

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<sup>1</sup>Cummins to Smalley, July 6, 1903, Cummins Papers, Letterbooks, Vol. 6.

This year we said, "We endorse the policy of reciprocity as the natural complement of Protection. Reciprocity between nations is trade for mutual advantage and both sides must give and take."

. . . I have been saying, . . . that if we are to have substantial reciprocity, we must give as well as take. . . . I have had put into this platform my exact language on this point, and it is an immense step in advance.

. . . . .

The truth is that our platform this year is as clear and specific as platforms can be. We do not declare that the next Congress should take up the work of revision, nor could we. It is not the business of a platform to do more than set forth principles and policies. You will observe, however, that we do not say that revision should be postponed until after the presidential election. . . . but I do object to the general characterization of the platform simply because it is easy to put upon a man like Allison the charge of being meaningless. While Senator Allison approved this platform, and stood for it, I am its author in every essential respect, and the criticism you make should fall upon me rather than upon Allison. . . . Two classes of persons, utterly dissimilar in their motives, have combined to put a misconception upon the platform; first, men like yourself, who honestly want something done and who may be disappointed in that our statements were not more radical than they are, and persons who want to make it appear that the men with whom I have been fighting have been whipped.

APPENDIX B

PORTIONS OF THE 1904 IOWA REPUBLICAN PLATFORM<sup>1</sup>

.....

6. We believe in the protective tariff, which builds American factories, makes possible great and small American industries and gives employment to American labor. We believe in the American home market for the products of American farms, factories and shops. We believe it unwise to legislate in a manner to provoke American industries to making war upon each other. Under the protective system, newly inaugurated in 1897, the country has enjoyed unusual prosperity. Protective duties have kept work and wages at home and have furnished the revenue with which to pay the expenses of a foreign war, to rebuild the navy, to enlarge and newly equip the army, to extend our coast defenses and have made possible the Nation's expansion. Fortified by the advantages and benefits of a great home market the American manufacturers have thus had the courage and the capital with which to invade foreign markets. Our tariff system by giving assurance to the world that the revenues are ample has advanced the credit of our people into lenders instead of borrowers. We declare for faithful adherence to this system which found its highest fulfillment in laws bearing the names of William McKinley and Nelson Dingley.

7. We are in favor of reciprocity in non-competitive products only.

8. We are opposed to trusts and combines, of whatever nature, organized to extort undue and exorbitant profits from the people. We rejoice in the success of President Roosevelt in his efforts to enforce in the courts the laws of Congress made to curb the improper exercise of power by these great organizations.

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<sup>1</sup>Iowa Official Register of 1905, (Des Moines: Secretary of State, 1905), p. 247.

## APPENDIX C

### PORTIONS OF THE 1904 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL PLATFORM<sup>1</sup>

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#### Protection to American Industries

Protection which guards and develops our industries is a cardinal principle of the party. The measure of protection should always at least equal the difference in the cost of production at home and abroad. We insist upon the maintenance of the principle of protection, and therefore rates of duty should be readjusted only when conditions have so changed that the public interest demands their alteration, but this work can not be safely committed to any other hands than those of the Republican party. To entrust it to the Democratic party is to invite disaster. Whether, as in 1892, the Democratic party declares the protective tariff unconstitutional, and whether it demands tariff reform or tariff revisions, its real object is always the destruction of the protective system. However specious the name, the purpose is ever the same. A Democratic tariff has always been followed by business adversity. A Republican tariff by business prosperity. To a Republican Congress and a Republican President this great question can be safely entrusted. When the only free trade country among the great nations agitates a return to protection, the chief protective country should not falter in maintaining it.

#### Foreign Markets Extended

We have extended widely our foreign markets, and we believe in the adoption of all practicable methods for their further extension, including commercial reciprocity wherever reciprocal arrangements can be effected consistent with the principle of protection and without injury to American agriculture, American labor or any American industry.

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<sup>1</sup>Iowa Official Register of 1905, (Des Moines: Secretary of State, 1905), pp. 241-43.



## Combinations of Capital and Labor

Combinations of capital and of labor are the results of the economic movements of the age, but neither must be permitted to infringe upon the rights and interests of the people. Such combinations when lawfully formed for lawful purposes are alike entitled to the protection of the laws, but both are subject to the laws and neither can be permitted to break them.

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APPENDIX D

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S SECOND ANNUAL MESSAGE TO CONGRESS<sup>1</sup>

.....

One proposition advocated has been the reduction of the tariff as a means of reaching the evils of the trusts which fall within the category I have described. Not merely would this be wholly ineffective, but the diversion of our efforts in such a direction would mean the abandonment of all intelligent attempts to do away with these evils. . . . The only relation of the tariff to the big corporations as a whole is that the tariff makes manufactures profitable and the tariff remedy proposed would be in effect simply to make manufactures unprofitable. To remove the tariff as a punitive measure directed against trusts would inevitably result in ruin to the weaker competitors who are struggling against them. Our aim should not be by unwise tariff changes to give foreign products the advantage over domestic products, but by proper regulation to give domestic competition a fair chance; and this cannot be reached by any tariff changes which would affect all domestic competitors, good and bad alike. The question of the regulation of the trusts stands apart from the question of tariff revision.

. . . we combine a system which will permit us from time to time to make the necessary reapplication of the principle to the shifting national needs. . . . The first consideration . . . is, the principle of putting American business interests at least on a full equality with interests abroad, and of allowing a sufficient rate of duty to more than cover the difference between the labor cost here and abroad . . . .

One way in which the readjustment sought can be reached is by reciprocity treaties. It is greatly to be desired that such treaties may be adopted. They can be used to widen our markets and to give a greater field for the activities of our producers on the one hand, and on the other hand to secure in practical shape the lowering of duties when they are no longer needed for protection among our own people, or when the minimum of damage done may be disregarded for the sake of the maximum good accomplished.

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<sup>1</sup>Theodore Roosevelt, State Papers as Governor and President (Vol. XV of The Works of Theodore Roosevelt, ed. Hermann Hagedorn. 20 vols., National edition; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), pp. 144-45.

APPENDIX E

RESOLUTIONS OF THE HOME MARKET CLUB OF BOSTON<sup>1</sup>

(Strictly Private.)

"Against Competitive Reciprocity, and in  
Favor of Preserving Existing  
Conditions."

"Proposed for Adoption by Home Market Club, April 3, 1903."

"Whereas, There seems to be a well defined attempt in Massachusetts as well as in Iowa to commit the Republican Party to the advocacy of reciprocity treaties in competitive products; to the removal of duties on so-called raw materials; and to a general reduction of protective duties: Therefore the Home Market Club desires to place itself on record by the following resolutions:

1. We consider the great prosperity of the country under the Dingley Tariff as fully justifying that tariff and the protective policy behind it.
2. We accept the policy of reciprocity in non-competing products as laid down in the last Republican National Platform, but we are unalterably opposed to reciprocity in competing products, or to destroying the home market for one American industry for the sake of enlarging the foreign market of another.\*
3. We believe that the producers of so-called raw materials are as much entitled to reasonable protection as the makers of finished goods, and we are sure that a removal of protection from the one class of products will precede but a little its removal from the other also.
4. We believe that a general reduction of the tariff, instead of being an advantage to the community, would be a great calamity -- unsettling business, throwing labor out of employment, and reducing wages.
5. We do not believe the people as a whole have yet forgotten the results of the tariff revision of 1893 - 4 and we also do not believe that they desire to try another similar experiment.

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<sup>1</sup>E. N. Foss to Cummins, April 3, 1903, Cummins Papers,  
Miscellaneous Correspondence, Box 9, File 33.

6. This club is not a political organization, and it considers no party entitled to its support that does not stand for the cardinal principles of protection as a doctrine of National policy.

\*After declaring strongly for protection, the Republican National Platform of 1900 reads: "We favor the associated policy of reciprocity so directed as to open our markets on favorable terms for what we do not ourselves produce in return for free foreign markets."